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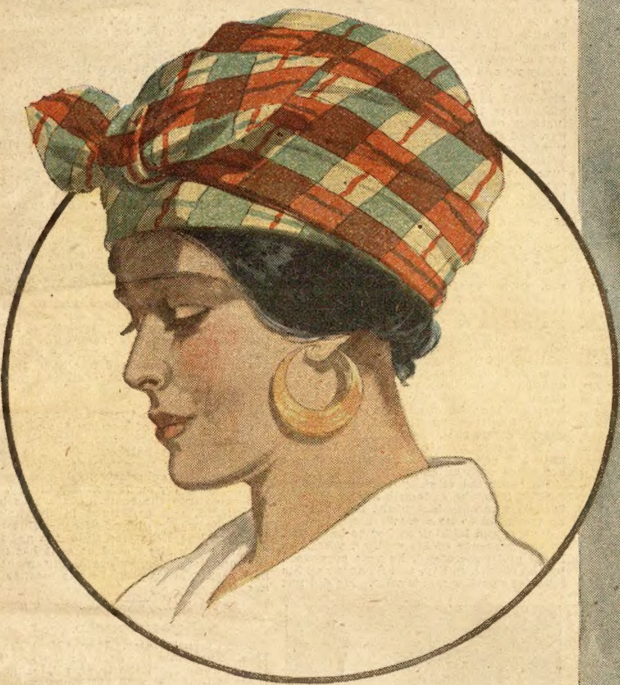
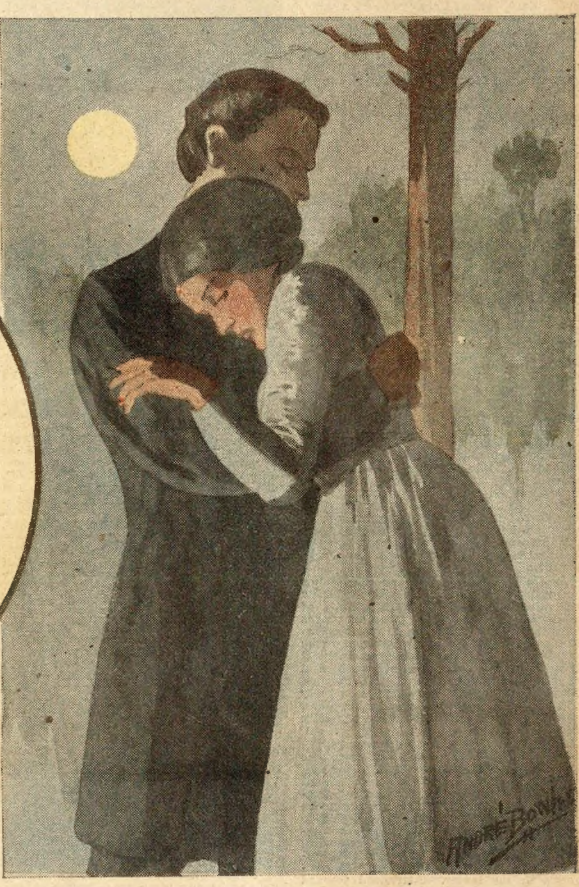
IN OLD SLAVERY DAYS;

Or, The Octoroon's Revenge

By Emma Howard Wight





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CHAPTER I.

"HIS NEIGHBOR'S WIFE."

THE warm, Southern night was brilliant with moonlight, drenched with the perfume of roses, orange blossoms, lilacs and honeysuckles, rioting in the luxuriance of June bloom. Very picturesque looked Ridgley Hall, a quaint, Colonial mansion, in the vivid silver light of the moon. Its master, Warren Ridgely, drew in a long, deep breath of the delicious scented air, as he stepped out upon the portico which extended the entire length of the house. He was a man of splendid physique and strikingly handsome face, a straight artistic nose, dark gray eyes, a beautiful mouth, a tawny, light brown mustache, and hair a shade darker.

"A perfect night!" he murmured. "An ideal night for lovers."

A soft passionate light stole into his eyes, as he stepped down from the portico. He crossed the lawn swiftly, a look suggestive of joyous expectancy lighting his face, and turned off into the path leading to the river. Suddenly a woman glided out from behind a mass of orange blossoms and stood directly in his path. A woman, slim and lithe, with very dark eyes and hair, a pale yellow skin, colored like pomegranates on the cheeks, and full, vividly crimson lips. Her black hair was braided in two heavy braids that fell to her knees. She was neatly dressed in a print gown and embroidered white apron.

She was an octoroon, a lovely, alluring creature, but Warren Ridgeley looked at her with a frown.

"Why are you barring my way, Olata?" he asked. "Stand aside and let me pass."

A quiver of pain passed over the octoroon's face, but she was a slave, and although she had lain in his arms and felt his kisses on her lips, while he whispered tender words in her ear, he was her master and the instinct of obedience was the heritage of her race. She bowed her head and moved aside.

But as he moved by her, she murmured:

"You am goin' to her!"

He started and wheeled around, facing her. His eyes flashed angrily, but mingled with that anger was a look of apprehension. He laid his hand heavily on her arm.

"What do you mean?" he demanded. She shrank from him and was silent. "Answer me."

"I mean that you am goin' to her who have stoled your love from Olata," she replied, plaintively. "Her with the hair like gold and skin like the arbutus flower."

He flung her arm from him.

"You jealous fool, you do not know what you are saying!" he cried, but he bit his lip nervously, as he spoke. "Because my passion for you has cooled, because I have tired of you, because I no longer want you, you imagine that I have fallen in love with——" he hesitated a moment, "with my neighbor's wife, the wife of my dearest friend. Preposterous! absurd!" and he laughed aloud, but the laugh sounded forced and unnatural. She lifted her eyes and looked at him a look questioning, suggestive, and at the same time pathetic. "Of course, I know that you refer to Mrs. Compton," he added, with an uneasy shrug of the shoulders. "She is the only one who answers to your fanciful description."

"Yes," said Olata, simply. "It am her I mean. She have taken your love from Olata," she repeated.

He frowned impatiently, but he felt that it would be impossible to make her understand—to the cruetly of such an intention he never gave a thought—that she had simply been his plaything until he had wearied of her. The beautiful, passionate creature could only feel, she could not reason, she was incapable of discrimination. The word love had but one meaning for her. Warren Ridgely was her master, but he had been also her lover, tender and passionate. But the beautiful wife of Ernest Compton had taken his love from her. Intuitively she had guessed the guilty secret that Warren Ridgely had believed was known only to himself and one other creature—his mad and guilty love for the wife of his friend. The octoroon's knowledge was startling and alarming. He stood reflecting for a moment as to what course he should pursue.

"Olata," he said, at length, going a little nearer to her, "if you speak to any one of these jealous fancies of yours, I will punish you. I will for one thing, send you back to the quarters. My mother is fond of you, and has almost caused you to forget that you are a slave. You would find life very different at the quarters."

"I'se not goin' to say anything to nobody, massa." The last word came a little awkwardly from her lips. She had almost forgotten how to so address him. He, himself, had taught her not to call him master. But now he accepted it as a matter of course.

Warren breathed a long sigh of relief.

"That's all right, then!"

"No, Olata never tell," declared the octoroon, "fo' if Mist' Ernest Compton knowed, he'd kill you sho'."

Her words stung him like a lash, and the hot blood mounted to his brow. He saw the truth in all its shame and treachery. He was the betrayer of the man who had been his friend and companion from childhood, the purloiner of his honor. Then a voice within him whispered that it was not too late to turn back. The sanctity of Ernest Compton's home was still inviolate, his honor unsullied. For a moment or so he stood motionless, while a struggle went on within him. Then suddenly there arose before him the face of a woman, the woman with "hair like gold and skin like the arbutus flower." His heart bounded, his pulses leaped, the struggle ended. Honor and loyalty were forgotten. He turned and passed swiftly along the path toward the river.

The slave girl stood still, watching him.

"She's waitin' fo' him over thar o- the other side of the river," she murmured. "She's white and a lady, but her heart's false. She smiles in her husband's face, and gives her kisses to his friend. She has taken him away from me, and I hate her."

A change passed over the exotic face, the eyes narrowed, the lips tightened. It was a cruel, vindictive face, the face of creature to be feared. After a moment her face saddened and her head drooped. "He said he'd send me back to the quartahs if I told," she murmured. She stood thinking, then slowly shook her head. "I reckon the mistis'll send me back to the quartahs—when she knows."

She stood watching the tall form of the master of Ridgley Hall until a turn in the path hid it from view. Then she turned and went slowly in the direction of the house.

A footbridge spanned the river which ran between the two plantations, Ridgeley Hall and Compton Manor. Compton Manor stood upon a hill, with terraced grounds sloping to the river. Warren Ridgeley made his way to a summer-house in a remote part of the grounds. In the door of the summer-house, framed in moon-pale roses, stood a golden-haired woman, gowned in white.

Warren drew her in his arms, passionately breathing her name.

"Lucille!" He kissed her lips, her hair, her throat, murmuring inarticulate words of tenderness and passion. Suddenly he felt her start, and a shiver ran through her slim body. The dreamy silence of the night was broken by the voices of the negroes at the quarters singing a quaint sweet lullaby.

"What is it, dearest?" asked Warren Ridgeley.

Lucille Compton put aside his encircling arms and stepped back. Her exquisite face looked very pale, her wonderful, dark-lashed blue eyes had a wide, strained look.

"I had—forgotten," he half whispered.

"Forgotten what, my dear love?"

She shrank from him, drawing a pained breath.

"Don't speak to me like that," she murmured.

"What do you mean?" he asked, almost roughly, chilled by a sudden fear. "Lucille, you are torturing he. Tell me, explain the meaning of this sudden change in you."

"Warren, all is over between you and me. We will never meet again like this." His face whitened and he made an involuntary movement toward her, but she stopped him with a gesture. "I came here tonight to tell you this, but when I saw you, heard your voice, I forgot all save my love for you. It was the singing of the darkies that caused me to remember." She paused an instant, listening. "Do you know what it is they are singing? A lullaby. It was that which caused me to remember that before so many months have passed I shall be a—mother."

He gave a great start.

"Today I knelt and thanked God that this knowledge came to me before I had brought dishonor on the father of my unborn child."

He stood looking at her silently, despairingly. Never had she seemed so beautiful, so desirable, so unspeakably dear as in the moment that he knew she was lost to him forever. Only a few minutes had passed since he had held her in his arms, her lips giving back his kisses, her heart throbbing against his, and now he dared not touch even so much as her hand. With a groan he turned from the sight of her pale loveliness and covered his face with his hands. When he looked up, she was gone.

Lucille entered the library where her husband sat reading. He put aside his book and welcomed her with a smile of great tenderness. No two creatures could be more unlike than the man Lucille loved and the man to whom she was married. Ernest Compton was entirely lacking in the splendid strength and magnificent physique that distinguished Warren Ridgeley. He was slenderly built, slightly stooped in the shoulders, with a pale, scholarly face and very dark hair and eyes.

He had met his wife two years before at a fashionable summer resort where she was the acknowledged belle. He had fallen in love with her. When he asked her to become his wife, she had consented readily, mistaking the very sincere liking she had for him for love. She was not very long in discovering her mistake. Owing to the intimacy existing between her husband and Warren Ridgeley, she was brought constantly in contact with the latter. Attracted toward each other from the very first hour of their meeting, that attraction soon ripened ino a deeper, tenderer feeling. His mad love for the wife of his friend carried everything before it. He realized whither they were drifting, but she did not, until one day she awakened to the knowledge that the feeling she had for her husband was not love, and that with all the passionate intensity of her nature—an intensity, a capacity for loving she had not known she possessed—she loved Warren Ridgeley. Then there came a day when that love found utterance.

As his wife came up to him, Ernest Compton noted the pallor of her face and the mute look of suffering in her eyes.

"Dear, what is the matter? Are you ill?" he questioned, anxiously, as he arose and placed her in a low comfortable chair.

His touch, his voice soothed her. The unrest, the struggle, the mingled ecstasy and pain through which she had passed had left her very tired. A longing came over her for peace, for rest.

"No, I am not ill," she replied, with a faint smile. "I am only very tired."

"What has tired you, dear?" he asked, gently.

She looked up at him and for the moment was tempted to tell him all and ask him to forgive her, if not for her own sake, for that of their unborn child. Then, womanlike, she remembered the injury her confession would entail upon the man she loved, and her lips were sealed.

"Ernest," she said. "I have been thinking today that I have not been as good a wife to you as I might."

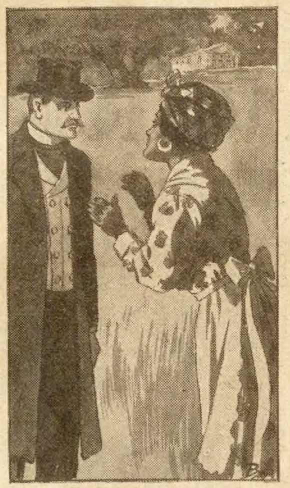
He smiled.

" I have found nothing wanting," he replied.

"You have been—happy?" she faltered, the shamed color creeping ton her pale cheeks.

"Happier than I can tell you, sweet wife."

Her head drooped. She realized that he had seen nothing, suspected nothing, because of his perfect faith in the wife he loved and the man he believed to be his friend. How little he guessed that he had been living in a fool's paradise and how near to shipwreck had been his happiness, peace and honor.



"What do you mean?"

"Come out on the portico," Ernest Compton suggested. "The night is so beautiful."

She suppressed a shudder. The night, with its moonlight, its fragrance, had grown hateful to her. Its beauty was a mockery.

"I think I will go to bed," she said, rising. "My head aches."

Ernest went with her to the door of her bedroom. She lifted her beautiful face to his, and he tenderly kissed her lips.

"Sleep, my dear one, and rest," he said, as he turned and left her.

But she knew she could not sleep, and said to the mulatto girl, who came to meet her as she entered the room:

"Bring a dressing sacque and loosen my hair, Rose, and then you can go."

The girl glanced curiously at her mistress, as she turned away to obey. The night before, young Mrs. Compton had come to her room, her blue eyes sparkling like sapphires, the pale pink of her cheeks flushed to carmine, a dreamy smile on her lips. She had spent the evening sitting on the portico with Warren Ridgeley, while her husband sat reading in the library. It was then he had won from her a promise to meet him in the summer-house the next evening.

Her first thought when she awoke the next morning was of that meeting, and a thrill that was half fear and half rapture went through her. She was alone, her husband having risen some hours before. She lay in a delicious reverie until Rose entered. When she attempted to rise, however, she was seized with sudden faintness. Rose went in haste for Aunt Sabina.

"You stay whar you is," the old darky said to the girl. "I'll see to de mistis."

She went upstairs, approached the bed, and stood looking down upon the pale young wife of her master with a smile on her lips. Lucille looked up at her a little wonderingly.

"De Lord bress de chile!" ejaculated the old darky. "My young massa gwine to be nigh offen his hade wid joy when he knows."

Then Lucille knew.

CHAPTER II.

"I SHALL NEVER MARRY."

The beauty of Nature appeals to us when we are happy, we feel in harmony with it; it mocks us when we are suffering and unhappy.

The loveliness of the night, which he had designated as a night for lovers, had lost its charm for Warren Ridgeley, as he retraced his steps, upon finding himself alone in the summer-house. He realized, as he had never realized before, how one's life can change in a few minutes, change from exquisite joy into bitterness and pain. His pain was all the more acute because of its novelty. An only child, pampered from his birth, he had never known what it was to have a wish denied, a desire ungratified. And now the one thing he longed for, as he had never longed for anything before, was denied him.

He stood for a while on the bridge, looking, with unseeing eyes, at the moon-silvered river, starred with water lilies, the perfume of which rose heavily to his nostrils. In after years the perfume of water lilies always brought back the pain of that night. A nightingale was singing, filling the silence of the night with the thrilling sweetness of its song. It was hateful to Warren Ridgeley, because it was suggestive of the soft whisperings, the passionate caresses of lovers.

He was tortured by a sickening sense of loss, the unrest of thwarted passion, and the sting of jealousy. He knew how strong in a woman's breast was the maternal instinct.

"She will cease to love me after a little while," he murmured miserably, "and her heart will turn to the father of her child. And I shall never love nor want another woman as I love and want her." He sighed with intense bitterness. "I can't remain here," he continued, as he turned homeward. "I shall go away for a year at least."

This resolution brought a certain sense of relief. At least he would be spared the torture of meeting, day after day, the woman he loved, knowing she would never be his.

On entering the house he went at once to the diningroom and poured himself out a stiff drink of brandy, but the potent liquor had no power to bring forgetfulness or relief. For hours he walked restlessly up and down his bedroom.

He was not alone sleepless. Olata lay stretched in her lithe grace, still and motionless, but she was not sleeping. The instinct of self-repression was born in her, and she gave no outward sign of the tumult of feeling that possessed her. With all the intensity of her tropic nature she loved the man who, with the easy morality of the Southern slaveholder, was her master and her lover. And she hated with equal intensity the fair-faced white woman whom she believed had stolen his love. It was a cruel, relentless hatred, all the more dangerous because of its secretiveness.

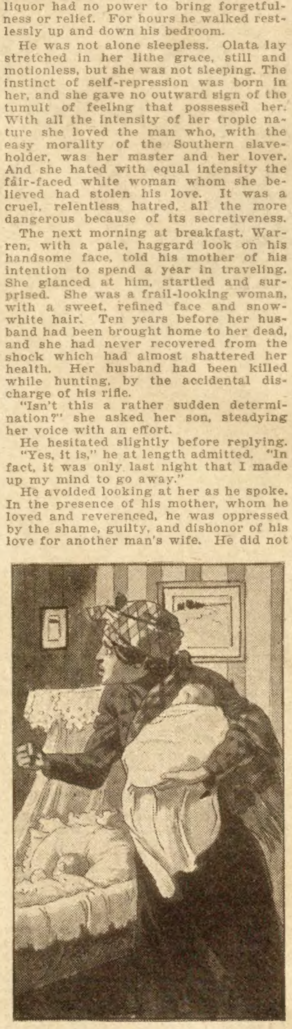
The next morning at breakfast, Warren, with a pale, haggard look on his handsome face, told his mother of his intention to spend a year in traveling. She glanced at him, startled and surprised. She was a frail-looking woman, with a sweet, refined face and snow-white hair. Ten years before her husband had been brought home to her dead, and she had never recovered from the shock which had almost shattered her health. Her husband had been killed while hunting, by the accidental discharge of his rifle.

"Isn't this a rather sudden determination?" she asked her son, steadying her voice with an effort.

He hesitated slightly before replying.

"Yes, it is," he at length admitted. "In fact, it was only last night that I made up my mind to go away."

He avoided looking at her as he spoke. In the presence of his mother, whom he loved and reverenced, he was oppressed by the shame, guilty, and dishonor of his love for another man's wife. He did not dare think of how shocked and grieved she would be if she knew, especially at his perfidy to his friend, for she loved Ernest Compton almost as much as though he were here own son.



Carrying the child of Lucille Compton.

It was a moment or so before Mrs. Ridgeley spoke.

"A year is a long time," she said at length, with a faint smile. "I shall miss you."

He glanced at her quickly, and something in her pale face told him of the pain she was trying so bravely to conceal.

"I am a selfish brute, mother, even to think of leaving you!" he exclaimed. She looked radiant; she sighed with relief.

"It's good of you, dear, to give it up for me," she said, tenderly.

"Good of me!" He laughed harshly. "There isn't much good in me, mother. I should have never even contemplated leaving you for so long a time."

She shook her head smilingly, but her eyes lingered upon his face questioningly, wistfully. She felt that there was something wrong, but she had too much tact to try to find out what it was.

"Warren," she said, after a moment, "I wish you would follow Ernest Compton's example."

He started and looked at her quickly.

"What do you mean, mother?" he asked.

"I wish you would marry, Warren," she explained.

He shook his head gloomily.

"I shall never marry," he declared.

"Never marry," she repeated. "Why, Warren, it's your duty to marry. You are the last of your race. You must leave children to succeed you. The old name must not die out." She paused, but he was staring gloomily down at his plate, and said nothing. "You have never yet seen the woman you would care to make your wife," she continued, "but some day you will," and she smiled.

He arose abruptly.

"You will excuse me, mother, I think I will go for a ride," he said. "I have the deuce of a headache, and do not feel inclined for breakfast."

He went out, and in a little while she heard him galloping away from the house. She arose, went to the window, and watched him riding down the avenue on his beautiful black mare, Queen.

"He rides as though he were trying to exorcise some demon of unrest," murmured Mrs. Ridgeley, musingly. "Something is troubling him."

There was another who watched the master of Ridgeley Hall, as he rode away, with languorous, tender eyes. It was the octoroon, Olata.

"He is so handsome, so strong," she murmured, passionately. "He's the finest rider in the country." She sighed longingly. "His voice war low and sof' and lovin' when he whispered in Olata's ear, his eyes war tender lak. Now his voice is cold, his eyes are hard, and he whispers no mo, in Olata's ear when the nightingale sings in the tree. Olata loves his beauty and his strength, she is hungry for his kisses and the touch of his hand." She pressed her hand to her heaving breast and her full red mouth quivered. "But he cares no mo' for the kisses of Olata."

She turned from the window and went about her work of putting the room to rights, as she heard her mistress' light footstep in the hall outside. The passionate, loving woman was simply the slave, humble, submissive, self-repressed.

Mrs. Ridgeley smiled at her kindly, as she came into the room. Olata was her own maid, and had lived in the house since she was a girl of fifteen. But the octoroon knew that the time was not far distant when she would be sent back to the quarters, for before many months had passed she would be the mother of a child.

CHAPTER III.

MOTHERHOOD.

Seven months later. It was New Year's Day. The snow lay deep on the ground, icicles hung from the trees, glittering in the sunlight. It was quite early in the morning, the sun had not risen on that beautiful day, the first of the new-born year. The house was very still, not so much as a footfall broke the silence.

Ernest Compton stood at the library window. The dazzling white of the snow, the trees a mass of iridescent coloring, made the outside world appear like a scene from fairyland. But Ernest Compton looked at it with unseeing eyes. In the bright morning light his face looked haggard and pale. In the dead stillness he could hear the rapid beating of his heart, as he strained his ears, listening for some sound in the room above, where, during the long hours of the night, life and death had fought for mastery. So long as he lived, Enrest Compton never forgot those hours of agonized suspense, while the life of the young wife he idolized hung trembling in the balance.

Suddenly a sound broke the silence—the wail of a new-born child. Ernest Compton started. Mechanically he turned from the window, moved to the center of the room, and stopped, his eyes fixed upon the door. He knew that a few minutes would end the terrible suspense of the night, and yet those few minutes until the door opened, and Aunt Sabina entered seemed endless. He breathed a long sigh of relief as he looked at her. She was smiling.

"Thar's a fine baby gal up sta'rs, young massa, bress her heart!" she said.

"And—my wife?" he murmured.

"Oh, de young mistis am as peart as kin be 's'pected," replied Aunt Sabina.

"Thank God!" Ernest Compton dropped into a chair, weak and trembling.

"I'se gwine to bring you a glass ob wine, honey," said Aunt Sabina, turning to go out.

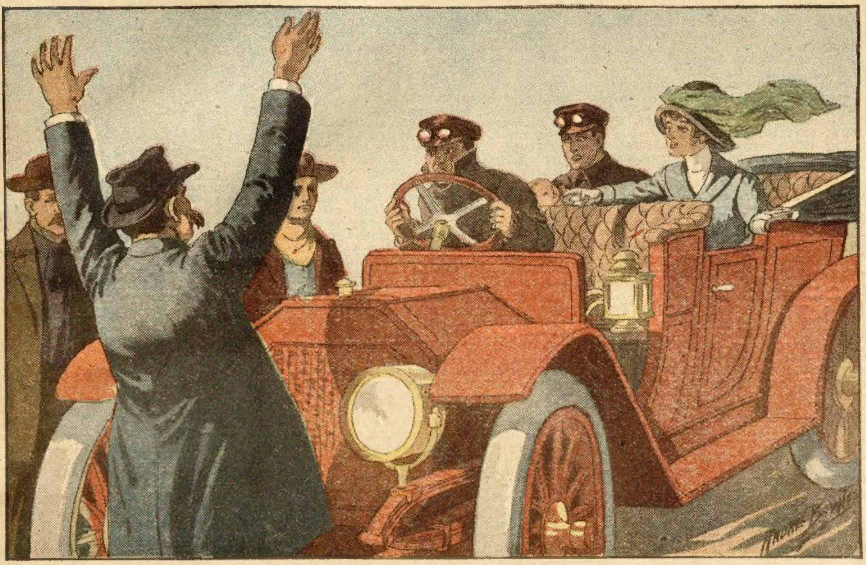
A little later Ernest Compton was permitted to go into the room where his wife lay, her beautiful face dead white,

(Continued on page sixteen.)

A SPLENDID LIAR;

Or, A Baby and a Tonneau

By MASON RAY



"You're talking nonsense, Buck Holben!"

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"LESS than a month ago I didn't own a lop-eared mule."

Joe was half soliloquizing, so I remained mute, watching his big car swallow clay road like winding tape.

"Now," he mused, audibly, "my autograph is good at two banks. I'm able to purchase a motor costing four horizontal figures. I don't seem to sense it. I must be dreaming."

"Then take an opiate," I urged him. "We don't want this dream to fade."

Joe paid no heed. His dark eyes gazed ahead into space, while his strong, toil-hardened hand guided the modern six-cylinder monster. Seeing him preoccupied, I let him alone. That is the soul and essence of real friendship. Since the highway presented no serious impediments, I was willing he should retrospect. Lord knows he had sufficient thought-rations to last him across one State and into another! When a poor dog of an engineer is shifted with the twinkling of an eye from poverty to unexpected wealth, the experience is more or less bewildering. That was exactly what ailed Joe Arkwright, and I let him think it out.

The accident of his sudden riches loomed rather large in my own mind. As we sped westward, I fell to reviewing mentally memories of old Ben Overholt. Nobody, living or dead, could have forecast the eccentric old bachelor's design. For years he lived practically alone, adding cash to his bank credit and land to Oakdale. Then, at the age most people rest, the old chap hired a civil engineer to put in drains and bridges and grade choice fields, until the whole immense acreage of his vast estate was turned into an ideal farm with ideal parks. Joe was the man chosen to work the transformation scene, and for three or four years he came and went at old Ben's call.

"Toot that horn, you chump!" I admonished Joe at this point in my reverie. "Don't you get that team and load of hay in your eye-focus? Mind your driving!"

We braked and settled to a snail's pace, while the perambulating haystack let us by; then we resumed our former speed and ruminations.

During all the months that Joe poked about the marshes and streams of Oakdale, no one surmised—including Joe—that old Ben Overholt was studying him; that the aged millionaire was deliberately selecting an heir, was satisfying himself that he had found a man of clean soul and red blood. It was a fact, Ben's carefully executed will made this clear in curt, plain terms.

"Take care there! See that washout?" I warned. Joe was a natural born mechanician, but he was still an amateur driver, and I'm nervous. He easily swerved, however, slipped around the gully, and we rolled on to a level stretch. On either hand prairie farms lay outspread beyond the limit of my excellent eyesight. Everywhere the color scheme was a blend of chrome yellow, russet, madder, and burnt umber; the roadside turf was still emerald green; above the sky domed over the richly hued world in cobalt blue, and the rushing air was like old wine. For a mile or so I drank in the glory of this panorama, then settled back into the rut of reflection.

When old Ben finally shuffled off, and his last testament revealed the heir, I was astonished. It seemed incredible that our over-the-line neighbor had gone abroad seeking an inheritor, when I had been all my life under his very nose. Possibly he failed to admire my widowed mother's only and idolized son. He wanted brawn, and I am none too robust; he wished an athlete in size, and I am dumpy in form; he desired an up-to-date man of affairs, and I only dabble in water colors when not doing social stunts.

"Anyway, the awakening has a fixed date," Joe suddenly remarked, harking back to a statement made when we were several miles to the rear. "In five months this 'Arabian Nights' vision dissolves in air. That infernal proviso——"

"Forget it," I consoled, as his voice trailed to silence. "Fortune's tide has set your way; ten to one it'll keep on."

My advice sounded on deaf ears. Joe was staring introspectively at the now curving track.

"Mind that turn, you mutt, and stop grouching!" I scolded. Inwardly I sympathized. Ben Overholt had, inded, paralleled the kicking cow and her pail of milk. After bequeathing his fortune to Joseph Arkwright, his selected heir, he had annulled his generosity by tacking on to the very end of the instrument an extraordinary stipulction. The final clause had turned Joe's wind-tanned cheeks to the hue of oak leaves in autumn. It was nothing less than a decree that his heir, within six months of coming into possession, must wed! In case of disobedience the property passed into the hands of trustees for the Fair View Orphan Asylum. Because Ben Overholt felt the crushing weight of loneliness, because he, too late, regretted the lack of wife and children, he ordained that Joe should possess both.

To Joe this was a "cropper." Being no dime novel hero, he did not spurn Overholt's legacy. Since there were no relatives to be defrauded, he saw no reason for acquiring costly fame by refusing the offered wealth. On the contrary, he wanted the real estate and cash, with all the common sense of a healthy mind. But to marry in order to make good his title! There was the rub.

"He seemed a man of good judgment," Joe said, letting his third remark ooze out of his overcharged system. "I can't see what possessed him to put such a plug in his will. He appeared to think I'd instantly go wife-hunting. Do I look the part?"

He didn't. Joe's a man's man; he's big and dark and weatherbeaten. For many months he had lived in the open, directing his survey squad. To him the great West we now toured was a well-conned page, but drawingrooms were unexplored territory.

"You didn't need to hunt," I reminded him, and chuckled at the memory. "You were the quarry, you know. Every mature spinster near Oakdale showed sporting blood." I laughed aloud, while Joe frowned. He had, in truth, planned this auto trip in self-defense. When Miss Briggs inveigled him to a lawn affair, with tennis, he was tolerant but unhappy; when Mrs. Marsh, mother of six, invited him to an obviously match-making tea, he was disgusted; but when the elderly Grant sisters took him in hand, he bolted.

"Let's take a run across to the coast," he had invited, so we were off. Joe's restriction relating to his inheritance tied no string to his expenditure during the intervening months, provided no part of his wealth was diverted to investments. Therefore he purchased the car and acted as host to me, Billy Griswold, his intimate friend.

"I'll have a fling out of it," he declared. "For a week I'll be a Coal Oil Johnny; after that taste of a bottomless purse, I'll go back to work, and the remaining million may go to charity."

Every man's a fool once during a lifetime. This seemed Joe's day off. He intended to enjoy a slice of the fortune thrown at his head, to devour it and resume poverty. He argued with pad and pencil—while I drove—that he could, without infringing the terms of the will, use up a thousand dollars in each big town.

"Can't be done unless we turn convivial," I told him; "and we're not that sort. Anyway, here's Union City, where we're to lunch. Try it."

We were nearing one of the large Western towns, and presently, within the limits, Joe nosed our car in and out among trucksters' wagons, carriages, autos, the city's busy and prideful trolley, and impeding street signs. Evidently Union City had donned gala attire, had all but lost its head, and was filling its stomach. At every corner people munched fruit, peanuts and popcorn. Restaurants seemed beehives; the hotels received and disgorged intermittent groups. At the largest and most imposing of the hostelries we relinquished our car, entered the office and Joe ordered:

"Two of your best rooms, with private parlor and bath, please."

The pompadoured clerk eyed us languidly, motioned a boy to relieve us of suitcases, mentioned a number, and then stated:

"Best we have left; house is overrun; so's the town."

Their best proved to be a nine by ten, with a broken ewer and cracked basin. We made an attempt at cleanliness, descended to the diningroom, and ate leftovers from more fortunate early comers, then revisited the office and asked for our bill.

"Nothing," the clerk told us, wearily, and slumped back in his chair.

We couldn't grasp his meaning.

"It's the Congressman from this district," explained the anemic clerk. He's celebrating his recent election by treating his visiting constituents. We've orders to run free lunch from eleven to four."

"But we're not constituents," we contended.

"Doesn't matter," insisted the clerk, and subsided into a doze.

"You see; fortune dogs your steps," I told Ben Overholt's heir. "Try it on cigars; we're out."

At a tobacco store across and farther down the street a dapper and Frenchified attendant pushed toward us a box of havanas with the invitation: "Help yourselves. No charge, gentlemen. They're free."

This time a brand new mayor was handing out smokes.

"I'll get the car and we'll move on," Joe concluded.

While he was gone, I slipped into a near-by drink dispensary. My suspicions were gratefully confirmed. Booze flowed without price. In this case it was the sheriff.

With Joe again at the wheel, we butted our way through the thickening traffic. His narrow margins sent shivers down my spine. For a beginner he drove remarkably well, but the odds were against him. We had gone barely a block, when a shout made me turn. A cycle-mounted policeman came toward us in hot pursuit.

"They've discovered that we're not voters, and wish us to pay," Joe guessed, and stopped the motor.

"You dropped your wad in the garage, young man," hailed the public guardian, as he advanced, flourishing a dark object. It was Joe's well-filled purse. "They asked me to overtake you and return it," he explained.

"Thanks; here's for your trouble," Joe said, peeling off a bill, but the blue coat had turned and vanished in the crowd.

"Cut it out," I advised. "You're not intended for a profligate. You can't spend, lose, or give away cash."

"Well I'll be darned!" said Joe and put on speed.

That was a mistake. He should have resumed our snail's gait, or have let me drive. The next moment he veered about an oncoming truckster and we collided with an ill-placed street-sign.

When my thinking gear resumed action, Joe was being loaded into an emergency ambulance. The driver seemed pleased at his luck in securing a patient. Joe's big, green-painted touring car looked like a head-on collision. I had landed on top of a display box of tomatoes and was safe. When I extricated myself, I noticed that the vegetables were a sight. So was I. The grocer stood at left center and glared.

"It's your fault," I told him. "You'd no business to stick that sign out over the curb. Now you've ruined my clothes and smashed up my friend's machine."

"That's so," agreed a voice in the gathering crowd. "I warned you fellows to put them signs back. Now you're in for damages." The speaker was another blue coat. The grocer wilted. I left them chewing cotton, and followed my friend to the city hospital.

There I found the interne treating Joe for a sprained foot. It was already swathed in bandages and the air reeked of various drugs.

"I won't be cooped up for this," Joe declared. "When the machine's repaired, we'll go on."

There no use arguing with him. He insisted that doctors en route could dress the foot, and that I might drive. The last statement won my approval. Consequently, I haunted the public garage and hastened work on the dismantled car. Investigation showed that we had smashed the glass wind-shield, had punctured a tire, bent a rod or two and jammed the left mud guards. A day put everything in prime condition. Even the marred surface received a coat of quick-drying paint, and the big green roadster was ready for use.

When I offered payment, it was refused.

"The city defrays your expense," explained the foreman.

"This is a rum town," I told him. "We'd rather settle our own bills. We're neither cheap-skates nor dead beats."

At the hospital I found Joe engaged in heated controversy with the physician. The house doctor would accept nothing for his service. He said that the city admitted faulty street regulations. The corporation was delighted at getting off by paying our expenses. Consequently, we owed him nothing.

We had similar trouble with the grocer. He not only refused compensation for his demolished tomatoes, but offered me payment for my mussed-up suit of tweed. To escape further benevolence, we left town at second speed, with my toe on the accelerator. Ten minutes later, we were again heading westward. On either hand, great fields of stubble in chrome yellow, squares of new-plowed earth in tones of umber, distant views in sepia, and margins of emerald rushed by in mad flight.

"My fortune seems adhesive," was Joe's whimsical comment on the late happenings. "It's fate; I've no right to dissipate funds that pass on to charity. Rightfully it belongs to the orphan kiddies.

"Forget it!" I again admonished. "Five months is an age. Before the end you may have more fool's luck."

After this exchange of opinion we lapsed into companionable silence, while the machine wound up track, or turned aside for intermittent, slow-moving teams. At Farwell we halted a minute for tobacco, and later paused at Bluffton for a forgotten supply of matches. Several miles beyond the last stop we detected a peculiar and insistent sound that rose above the purr of the motor. It unquestionably came from the back of the car. By intently listening, we judged that it issued from beneath the unoccupied tonneau.

"Must be the cut-off," said Joe.

"Nothing of the kind," said I.

"Slack up and see," he commanded.

I let the machine come to a stand, yet the noise continued and increased in volume.

"Get out and look," said Joe.

I stepped over his mummied foot, descended, opened the closed front, thrust in my arm and drew forth an animated bundle.

"Reverse it," ordered Joe. "You've got it wrong side up."

He was right. When the bunch was inverted, clothing fell away like the blossoming of a flower and revealed the dark head, blue, tear-filled eyes, and quivering mouth of a small child!

"Cæsar's ghost! What do you know about that?" I cried.

Joe didn't know anything about it, and said so.

"It must be a parting gift from Union City," I told him.

"We couldn't have picked it up at Bluffton or Farwell," he declared, after a moment's thought.

"Union City threw it in for good measure," I insisted. "I never saw a town so given up to charity."

We stared blankly at each other, while the infant waved small fists and yelled.

"Hand it to me," Joe ordered, dragging his lame foot over into the tonneau. "You're scaring it into fits."

"Then," said I, passing it gladly into his awkward grip, "you'll give it lockjaw. Anyway, it's yours," I brightened at a sudden idea. "It's the beginning of that family stipulated in the will, I told him.

"Cut it out!" Joe snapped. "This is no joke."

"The weak point about it is the sequence," I declared. "To my mind, the wife should have come first."

Joe ignored my logic while he meditated. Oddly enough the youngster had indeed succumbed to a species of lockjaw; its mouth was closed in the semblance of a rosebud, and it contentedly cuddled against the engineer.

"If the child was abandoned at Union City and hidden in the space beneath the tonneau, why didn't it cry long ago?" questioned Joe, trying to fathom the mystery.

I had been poking about under the rear seat, and now held up a bottle that reeked of paregoric. I knew the narcotic, because my sister's child was occasionally doped, when circumstances warranted. Likewise I recognized the familiar nursing bottle with its rubber mouthpiece.

"The kid was drugged," I told him. "It might have been there since train time this morning."

Joe eyed me while the idea percolated. "That's so," he affirmed. "It might have been secreted by some one passing through Union City during the train's half-hour stop. We'd look like fools trying to locate its owner."

"We'll appear like fools, anyway," I comforted. "Or kidnapers," I added.

"What's to be done?" he queried.

"Turn it over to the orphanage," I suggested. "Or keep it as the nucleus of that family; it's the first step toward retaining your fortune."

Oblivious of my comments, Joe thoughtfully surveyed the landscape as if for inspiration.

"What State is this?" he finally questioned.

"A state of suspense," I gloomed. "And embarrassment," I added.

Once more the child set up a cry and refused to be placated. In vain Joe dandled it on his knee and chirped. The infant threw back its head, stiffened its spine, and howled. It kicked its feet, waved its clenched fists, and yelled. The situation became intense. Something had to be done.

"It's hungry," Joe hazarded in a tone that outclassed the child's screams. "What are we going to do about it?"

I showed him the working method of the drug-scented bottle. "You put milk in it and the infant drinks it," I told him.

With some persons a hint is equal to an illustrated lecture. Joe comprehended. For a time he sat thinking, while the child went off into apparent spasms. His eyes were fixed on a grazing herd of cattle in a roadside field.

"Here," he said, and dumped the infant in my lap. The next moment he was enduring agony, while he limped, bottle in hand, toward the pastured herd. This time I was the one to comprehend. Joe knew all about stock, and he was after milk. At least, he knew something about stock, but he evidently had much to learn. The first, second, and third bovines he approached were a failure in the matter of milk supply. They were being grazed for other than lacteal purposes. Joe finally paused at the off side of a brindled beast, and went into complete eclipse. I awaited his return in a state of mental distress not easily described. The orphan squirmed in my grasp, and emitted sounds out of all proportion to its size. I sweat the dew of fear, lest a chance wayfarer pass by and accuse me of attempting infanticide. In any case, being discovered in possession of a not-to-be-accounted-for babe was disconcerting in the extreme. That my companion was obviously engaged in pilfering milk added to the disgrace. In the midst of my perturbation I grinned. The story would make good reading for our home papers. In fancy I read a column that added interest to Joe's present notoriety as Ben Overholt's heir.

I was recalled to the present by Joe's return with his ill-gotten fluid. When he presented the filled bottle to the infant it ceased its yell so abruptly that the silence seemed uncanny. Judging from its appreciation of stolen goods, I concluded that the child must be the offspring of a yeggman and a shoplifter.

"We must examine its clothing for marks of identity," Joe cleverly decided, and climbed into the tonneau to ease his aching foot.

Accordingly we searched hems and neckbands. To our astonishment every article of the infant's apparel was new and every single dud was marked with the sales stamp of Montgomery Ward & Co.!

"It's a sample," I told Joe. "Send it back; we don't need it."

"Maybe," Joe doubtfully suggested, "we can give it away at the next farmhouse."

The idea had merit. I set the car in motion, and we hopefully proceeded on our interrupted tour. Joe now occupied the rear seat, holding the infant awkwardly on his knee, while it greedily drank its stolen dinner. For ten miles or more we eagerly scanned each residence. Joe ordered me to drive by the first and second, because of their ill-kept and poverty-stricken appearance. He had suddenly become difficult. Three more farm homes were condemned and ordered to the rear. Then I rebelled.

"I'll summon the very next housewife to the machine, and it's your cue to offer her the orphan," I insisted with some heat.

I kept my word. The woman I called out of her kitchen wore a handkerchief tied securely and inartistically on her head. She amazedly eyed the infant held out for her inspection, then backed off.

"Na, na," she cried, with uplifted hands of protest. "Na, na. I haf ten yoong ones alreatty. What for I take your chile. Go 'way!"

We went. At the next stop, a sharp-eyed female issued from her roadside home. She looked us over critically and exhaustively while suspicion radiated from her every pore.

"This hain't no baby farm," she dryly informed us, then retreated to her open door. "Kidnapers," I heard her explain to some invisible personage within. Then I heard the violent ringing of a rural 'phone.

"No more of that," commanded Joe. "Don't stop again until we lunch at Ridgely."

He spoke in the manner that awed me into silently accomplishing his bidding. Therefore without comment I obeyed. Mile after mile, the gray-green alfalfa fields of Kansas rolled to the horizon, while squares of new-plowed land, cattle-dotted pastures, and intense green plains of fall seeding flowed by like a river. Wayfarers in wagons, carriages, and several autos stared wonderingly as we shot by. We were objects of interest, and created a sensation. At each encounter I colored with vexation, and felt like a nursemaid trundling a go-cart. Then, on a lonely stretch of track, we neared a fixed object. On nearer approach it resolved itself into the lines of a motor with one occupant. The one occupant proved, on nearer view, to be a young lady clad in correct motoring garb of dark blue.

"Turn back, you gump, and detour!" Joe ordered. He was aflame with an agony of embarrassment. To pass the girl autoist in charge of the again plaintively crying youngster was unbearable. I meanly gloated at his discomfiture. He should have persisted in ridding himself of the unwelcome addition to our number.

"Serves him right," I thought, and deliberately advanced toward the evidently disabled motor. A slightly built girl was peering into this part of the working gear and was vainly trying to locate the trouble.

"Something's the matter with my car," she hailed us. "I'd be grateful if you'd step here and see what's wrong."

As she turned toward us, I saw a delicate blonde face lighted by deep blue eyes that were now wonder filled, but which glinted with politely repressed amusement. She was of the energetic, funloving, daring sort, ready for sport—even sport that flirted with danger. I knew the type. They hunt and moter and sail and play excellent golf and tennis.

"I'll gladly examine your machinery," I assured her. "In return," I maliciously suggested, "it would be a kindness if you'd tell us how to pacify this infant."

"You infernal idiot!" Joe muttered. I felt the angry glare of his dark eyes at my impervious back. Then the girl stepped lightly to the side of our car, and without ado climbed into the tonneau at Joe's side. Evidently the young lady failed to regard us seriously. For all the hesitancy she exhibited in appealing to us for assistance, we might have been two old maids in a runabout. The sight of an undersized, plain-appearing mechanician and a horribly embarrassed giant trying to hush a howling babe was doubtless reassuring.

"Poor little thing," she said, taking the child from Joe's unresisting hands. "I believe she's hungry, the darling," murmured the babe's new attendant in true feminine style. "Where's her bottle?" she demanded of the tongue-tied engineer. "Oh, there it is, and empty! What a shame! It must be filled at once; mustn't it, Birdie sweet?"

"Birdie sweet" and "she!" Note that. And we had been calling her "it." There was the woman for you; saw at once the girl look in the dainty face of the infant, and humanized it by the right pronoun.

We told the girl autoist our names, although the infant had already convinced her that we were harmless and outclassed a formal introduction two to one.

"I've heard Uncle speak of Mr. Arkwright and his splendid work on the Santa Fe and Atchinson Railroad," she said, turning toward my friend and forgetting my existence. Her own name she gave as Claire Joyace. Her home was at Hampton, fifty miles beyond Ridgely, where she resided with her aunt and uncle.

"That car is a new model Uncle just bought," she explained, as I bent over the dead motor. "Uncle is an auto fiend. He's had three makes, and I learned them all while we motored about on his stump-peaking tour. He's the newly elected Congressman from Union City district, and was obliged to go on at once to the capital. He thought I could take the car home, but you see I failed. Now," she frankly suggested, turning to Joe, "let's drive to that ranch house for milk, while your friend fixes my breakdown."

This plan of action brought Joe's lame foot into prominence. And as I listened to the girl's naively expressed commiseration, I regretted not having broken an arm or dislocated a shoulder. My friend explained his mishap without a shade of his constitutional reserve. To my astonishment his shyness had evaporated like mist in sunlight. A moment later they were off, with Joe at the wheel and Miss Joyace at his side, holding the thoroughly contented infant. I was left to putter at the injured motor like a paid chauffeur, while my thoughts followed the oddly-assorted trio on their errand of mercy.

"Pity," I ruminated, "is akin to love. (Hum, this is a new one—model of this year's output.) Compassion," I mused, "is an equal combination of both love and pit. (Nothing's wrong with the transmission. Oh, I see; she's been running on the batteries; they're exhausted, and she didn't turn on the gas. Doubtless a case of inadequate instruction), Now, if a man, a girl, a babe, and a sprained foot occupy one tonneau a sufficient time," I mentally figured, "the result might be——"

At this point in my cogitations I stood stock still, thinking so profoundly that I dropped the wrench on my toes.

"Confound it," I remarked, feelingly, then continued my reverie. "She's another orphan from Union City," I meditated, "and logically she belongs to this outfit. I'll do it."

"Doing it" meant to loosen a few important bolts that would emphasize the supposedly crippled condition of the really sound car. I reasoned that if any set of existing conditions are skilfully assisted, the desired result is inevitable. I was right. When informed, a few moments later, that her motor must visit a repair shop (may the manufacturers forgive me!) Miss Joyace readily consented to leave the car in charge of the ranch owner and proceed homeward in our company.

"It seems the only thing to do," she philosophized. "Besides," she reflected, "I can assist poor Mr. Arkwright with Miss Birdkins. Can't I sweetheart?" At which she commenced, and for miles, continued a senseless chatter addressed to the imbibing infant.

"Poor Mr. Arkwright!" Think of it. I had a notion to start up her motor. Joe was receiving altogether too much condolence. It appeared, however, to agree with him. The two seemed quite old friends. Take it from me, that there is nothing so efficacious as a howling infant to melt the ice of conventionality. I believe, barring the terms of the will, that Joe revealed his life history, ambitions, and reverses. As we reeled off the miles, they forgot my very existence. I might, indeed, have been an employe—a paid chauffeur. In an hour's time we entered the village of Ridgley and stopped at the small hotel.

Once more Joe proved the power of mind over matter by limping into the diningroom. Miss Joyace took charge of the orphan, and I—well, I formed the background. The landlady, ponderously inclined and voluble, welcomed us, gave us seats at a table, and ordered a maid to bring in food.

"The cherub!" she exclaimed, enthusiastically, as she relieved Miss Joyace of the infant while we dined. "It's the image of its father," she declared, and I covertly grinned, knowing I was exempt. "She's got his hair and your eyes, madam," she informed the amused Miss Joyace. "It's an uncommonly lively child," she declared. "Just how old is the darling?"

Joe, with back to the garrulous lady, sat with face lowered, red and miserable. His distress was so apparent that even I had the grace to pity his anguish. Doubtless he suffered doubly—in behalf of the lady thus subjected to annoyance on our account, as well as for himself. To relate our lengthy and improbable story was impracticable. Neither could the landlady's question be answered without involving us in prolonged discussion. As I mentally reviewed the situation, a sweet voice coolly gave the reply.

"She's fourteen months old the twenty-sixth day of next November," answered Miss Joyace, gamely coming to the rescue. It was a famous bit of guesswork. I'd have hit on anything from a month to two years.

"You don't say!" exclaimed the hostess. "She's well developed for her age,

(Continued on page seventeen.)

SONG IN SPRING.

Brother, my brother, 'tis time to rise
And out to the garden go;
Potatoes are waiting with watchful eyes
To see you at work, I know.
The onion, tomato and gay green bean
Are wondering whether you'll grace the scene—
They look for your coming with pleasure keen,
So take up the spade and hoe.

Brother, my brother, the spring is come;
Snow covers the ground no more.
Approaches the hour when all things hum
And knuckles and knees get sore;
So take up the carpets we trample on,
And hustle 'em out to the dewy lawn
And beat 'em beneath the golden dawn—
Beat 'em, then beat 'em some more.

Brother, my brother, the grass grows high—
I know not the why or how,
But surely 'tis useless to sit and sigh
And wrinkle your manly brow;
'Tis one of the wonders the year brings round,
Each spring time it certainly will be found—
The easiest answer is, I'll be bound,
To oil up the lawn mower now.

The Doge's Daughter;

Or, THE VAMPIRE OF VENICE ✤ By T. C. HARBAUGH

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CHAPTER XVII.

THE DOOM.

THE beautiful Lady Sylva expected the ill will of her father, because of the brusque manner in which he had received Vincent after the attempt at assassination in the ducal palace. She had hoped that he would condescend to thank her lover even after he had disclosed his identity, but the hatred of the Doge showed no abatement.

When Beppo returned to the palace and informed her that Leon was hiding in the House of the Crime, she felt relieved, and hoped that no one would find him there.

Her own situation was not without peril. She had escaped from the snares of the Vampire of Venice, whom she knew to be Raphael Sforza. His face had paled when she appeared on the grand staircase during the birthday fete, and her curse against the House of the Bat must have told him that his identity was known.

It was the night after Vincent's escape from the ducal palace by Sylva's help. The palace seemed silent, for there was no tread in the great corridors and but few lights chased away the shadows.

Suddenly there appeared in one of the halls a familiar figure. It made its way to the chamber formerly occupied by old Donati, the astrologer. It was the old man himself. His long white beard touched his girdle and his eyes looked out from behind heavy lashes. He advanced to his chair and drew toward him the instruments of his profession. The old man had come back.

For more than an hour he remained in the chair, casting a horoscope, and at last looked up with a troubled cast of countenance.

"Would he believe if I were to show it to him?" he asked himself, in audible tones. "Would the great Doge believe that the stars never lie to those who understand them?"

He was startled by a footfall beyond the door, and the next moment Marino Faliero stood before him. The gaze of Doge and astrologer met. The former was the first to speak.

"So you have come back?" said the Doge, in tones deepened by anger.

"I have returned."

"To consult the heavens?"

"Such is my profession, your Serenity."

"Knowest thou, Donati, that I have ceased to believe the stories of the stars as they are retailed by men of your ilk?"

Donati's gaze fell to the horoscope which lay before him, and the Doge saw that he trembled.

"Have you a new horoscope there?" queried Faliero.

"A new one, yes."

"Whose future have you cast?

"Marino Faliero's."

The Doge started and for a moment averted his face. Suddenly he shut his teeth hard.

"Let me know it," said he, looking once more at the shriveled features of Donati.

"I would rather not," was the reply.

"You must! It is the command of your Doge."

Thereupon the old man pulled himself together and picked up the sheet of parchment.

"A cloud obscures your fortunate star," he said slowly. "Oh, Doge, the cloud is dark ,and on the rim of it lies a terrible doom!"

"By the daggers of the Ten?"

"Nay, not by the dagger."

"What can be worse than that?" cried Faliero. "What greater misfortune can overtake the last of his family but one?"

Donati rose to his feet and drew his tall figure to its loftiest stature.

"Let me speak no more," he exclaimed, in tones of the bitterest agony. "Oh, Marino Faliero, go whilst thy gondola can take thee to the galleys, and hie away to a land where the stilettos of the Ten cannot find thee."

"I remain," was the reply, which came sternly through compressed lips. "You cannot frighten me from Venice whilst I have courage to face my foes."

"Then Donati's work is done. He will not live to witness the doom of Faliero and the downfall of Venice."

The old man moved to the table and took from a secret compartment therein a small vial which he hastily uncorked. A moment afterward he stepped back and faced the wondering Doge.

"You should live for your beautiful child," he cried, raising the vial to his lips. "The stars say that she will be happy with her English lover, but you should remain to forgive her for the love which she cherishes for him."

"For the English dog? Never!"

"He saved your life not long ago."

"But he comes of that nation whose great duke gave me an affront in public."

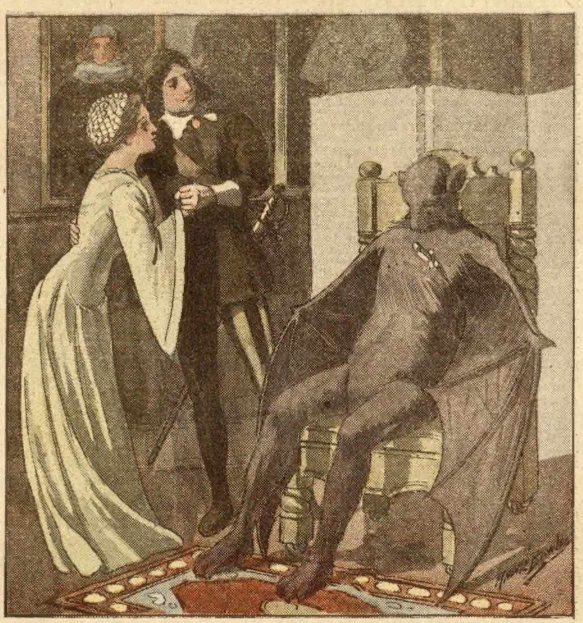
"Then Donati's course is won. Behold the white death of Naples!"

The contents of the vial were swallowed at a draught, and the astrologer sank back into the chair. Marino Faliero sprang to his side with a cry. He raised the head which had fallen upon the bearded breast; he felt the old man's pulse, but there was no flutter there.

"It is all over," said the Doge. "But he did not tell me how my doom is to be more terrible than the stroke of the dagger. What is more terrible than that? Ah, could he have meant the block?"

He looked for a few moments at the dead astrologer, then, glancing at the chart which was all mystery to him, stole from the chamber, and left the dead alone. He carried himself like an emperor as he glided through the palace halls and at length reached his own chambers. Then he closed and locked the door behind him.

Presently he crossed the room and threw open the window of a casement.



It was the bat!

His face had lost the last semblance of color. His teeth seemed to chatter like castanets. He opened and shut his hands like one in a state of indecision. He almost tottered as he went to a table which stood in the middle of the room. The golden call-bell rang.

"Pablo," cried Faliero, as a face appeared at the door, "bring me a flagon of Chianti."

Pablo vanished, but soon returned, setting before his master a flagon of wine on a silver salver.

"Is the Lady Sylva within the palace?" inquired Faliero.

"Yes, master. I heard her singing but a moment ago."

"And the Englishman? Has he gone?"

"He is not within the palace."

"Pablo, dost thou believe in the stars?"

"'Tis said they never lie."

The Doge took a long draught of wine.

"Pablo, what doom is more fearful than the dagger?" he asked, turning to the statuesque menial.

"Dost mean, master, as it pertains to the Doges?"

"Aye, I see you have it," smiled the Doge grimly.

"To Pablo's mind there is but one doom more fearful," was the reply.

"And that is——"

"The block, master!"

The chased goblet fell from Faliero's hand and was shattered to fragments on the marble.

"Thou canst go, Pablo," he said, in altered tones. And as the menial turned away, the eyes of the old Doge followed him.

"Saved from the stiletto to perish by the headsman!" he cried, clenching his hands. "It shall not be! I will strike at once and destroy. Mine shall be the first blow. Death to the Ten! I will anticipate that infamous tribunal."

Youth and resolution seemed to come back to him in the flash of thought. He sprang across the room and opened the door. In the corridor beyond he paused and lifted a hand to his ear. A strain of music was being wafted to him from a distant part of the palace. It was the Lady Sylva's favorite air. Marino Faliero listened, as his face changed color more than once.

"Donati said I might avert the greater doom by flight," said he to himself. "My galley awaits me, and the fleet of Venice is still at my command. But I will not play the coward. I will not stain the name of the family of Faliero by such an act. No, no! Sing on, my pretty child. Hark! what is that tumult without?"

He almost bounded to a window and leaned over the sill. The streets and canals of Venice lay beneath him. Sure enough there was a tumult without. He saw gondolas darting to and fro. He heard voices cut the balmy air of the Venetian night.

"Down with the traitor Faliero!" they said. "The Ten has condemned him for the safety of the Republic. To the block with the Doge!"

He closed the window and recoiled.

"I understand!" cried he. "The block is the doom old Donati withheld from me!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE TEETH OF THE TEN.

The tumult and the shouting did not decrease. Marino Faliero remained at the casement a short time, his face changing color in the space of a few seconds. The Ten had pronounced against him. The long-treasured emnity which had existed between him and the dread Tribunal had broken forth in open challenge. When he retreated from sight of the mob, he went direct to his private room and invested himself with his sword. His face was now set in determination.

Suddenly the door was thrown open, and Sylva stood before her father. The Doge gazed at her in silence.

"I have seen and heard," said the beautiful girl, with no show of excitement. "The Vampire of Venice is at the head of this conspiracy."

He remained silent.

"I mean Raphael Sforza," continued Sylva. "He is the adviser of the Tribunal. Saw your not how he paled when I gave the toast at the fete, and hoped that the House of the Bat might become a heap of rubbish?"

"I noticed that he lost color, child."

Slyva came forward and laid her hand on her father's arm.

"What will you do?" she asked, looking up into his face.

"Meet them on the grand staircase and die as becomes a ruler of the Republic!"

"No," she answered, in tones of remonstrance. "That must not be. We can crush the Ten if we have a little time, a breathing spell. The army and the fleet are with us."

A scowl darkened Faliero's features.

"The army and the fleet are seamed with treason," he hissed. "I have had my spies there, and I know."

"But the people?"

"The hot-headed tigers down yonder?" cried the Doge. "You have listened to their growls. They want blood."

"Then to the secret chanmber!" exclaimed the girl. "They cannot find you there."

The menaced head of the Republic stood irresolute. Meantime the tumult along the grand canal was still swelling on the air of night.

"Where is your English lover?" demanded the Doge, with the air of one who grasps at any stay in the hour of danger.

"He is safe beyond the fangs of the wolves," replied Sylva, proudly.

"Is he far away?"

"Beppo can bring him."

Faliero was breathing hard. He was fighting down the hatred of his lofty soul, and now that he thought of Vincent, the lone but gallant Briton, he was compromising with himself."

"Shall I send for Leon?" asked Sylva.

The Doge inclined his head, and Sylva hastened away.

Marino Faliero went out into the corridor and opened the door of a balcony. Protecting himself with the curtains he looked out. The whole city seemed to be a caldron of vengeance. Never till then did he know how the Ten had poisoned the minds of his subjects against him. One pities even a man-eating lion when he is brought to bay by a horde of hunters, and when the beast, driven to his last wall, is obliged to make a stand.

Everywhere lights flashed out over lagoon and palace. Faliero grasped the hilt of his sword and clinched his teeth. He almost heard the footsteps of his enemies in the corridors of the ducal palace. Moments seemed hours. Had Sylva sent for Vincent? And even when the Englishman came, what headway could he make against the mighty foe?

Vincent was found by the faithful Beppo and hastened to the palace. He entered by a secret way, which the dwarf pointed out, and all at once he confronted the Doge.

"I welcome you," said Faliero. "I am glad you have come, but how did you escape the mob?"

"By the finesse of Beppo," was the answer. "I am at your service, your Serenity."

"Come, then!" cried Faliero.

They hastened to another part of the palace, and the Doge pointed out a stairway which led to the lower part of the magnificent structure.

"Give me till tomorrow, and I will chain this hydra!" he exclaimed. "I will pit more than my personal strength against the Ten."

Sylva stood not far off, looking at her father and lover. The Doge turned upon her.

"Summon the palace guards," he commanded. "See that the portals, one and all, are secured."

"Yes, father."

Lady Sylva was gone and the Doge looked at Vincent.

"They may attempt to force the doors, but I doubt it," he said. "The palace of the Doges is sacred in the eyes of the Venetians."

"They are not Venetians now," returned Vincent. "They are bloodthirsty tigers."

An hour passed away, and the tumult seemed to have died down.

"The calm before the storm," said the Doge, noticing this. "Here comes the Queen of the Adriatic," and Sylva entered.

"The guards are posted," she said, and her gaze wandered to her lover, who, sword in hand, stood beside her father.

"Good!" exclaimed the Doge. "Now, Signor, come with me."

Vincent obeyed, treading at Faliero's heels, and they passed from the room and entered a smaller one, where were heaped the treasures of the ducal palace. Vincent was amazed. There were jewels everywhere. There were the spoils of the long wars of the Republic, weapons chased with gold and studded with precious stones, there were rubies, sapphires, diamonds, topazes, jacinths, the plunder of more than one army and palace.

"Behold!" cried Faliero. "All this shall be the dowry of my daughter, the beautiful Sylva of Venice. I have treasured it all up for her. The Ten know it is here. That black-robed Tribunal knows that I have heaped this treasure up for my only child, the last of her line."

"She is worthy of it all," said Vincent.

"Ha, what is that?" and the Doge turned, as a heavy footstep fell beyond the door of the treasure room.

He opened the door and was confronted by a man in armor, who inclined his head as their eyes met.

"Well, Rubio, what is it?" queried the Doge.

"The Ten sends a messenger," was the reply.

"Admit him."

"Here, master?"

"No, in the audience chamber."

The Doge and Vincent walked through a number of corridors which were well guarded. In the lofty-ceiled audience-room they paused and awaited the messenger of the Tribunal. He came in with a haughty stride and slightly bent his head to the ruler of the Republic.

"Deliver your message," spoke Faliero, coldly.

The man took from his belt a folded paper, which he extended. The Doge seized it and ran his eye over the page before him. Suddenly his hands tore it in twain, and handed the fragments to the astonished emissary.

"That is the answer of Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice!" he cried.

The man in armor thrust the pieces of paper into his belt, and backed toward the door.

"One moment," said Faliero. "Tell the tigers who thirst for ducal blood that I am here. Tell the Ten that, since they have invited the fray, they shall have their fill of it."

The man's gaze wandered to Vincent and settled on his face.

"Who is this personage?" he asked, glancing at the Doge.

Vincent stepped forward.

"I am Leon Vincent, son of the great earl who fell in battle for his king!" the Briton answered, returning the Venetian's look. "You see in me one who will stand by Marino Faliero to the last moment."

The lip of the messenger curled with scorn and he withdrew.

"The final die is cast," spoke the Doge. "The human tigers will not give me grace. What else could I expect when I tore their summons in twain?"

"Are there no loyal men in the army?" asked Vincent.

"It is inoculated with treason. I have been summoned to appear before the Ten, and that means condemnation. If I had but known of this, I——"

He paused abruptly and looked away, drawing in his breath like a man harboring his strength for the last grand play. Vincent saw him take from a secret pocket in his robe a tiny phial, which he held up to the light. The young Englishman saw that it contained a liquid as colorless as water.

"Nay! that is cowardice," he cried, springing to the Doge's side and wrenching the phial from his hands. "Shall the Lady Sylva say that her father died the death of a poltroon?"

"She shall not!" was the reply. "Dash the white poison of Naples to the floor!" and the phial fell at Vincent's feet, shattered into a thousand pieces.

"The moonlight is bright," smiled the Doge. "Let us look over the city."

They went out upon a balcony, and Faliero pointed to a palace that rose near by.

"What is that strange thing yonder on the balcony?" cried the Doge. "It resembles a huge bat."

"It is Raphael Sforza, the Vampire of Venice," answered Vincent, and Faliero clenched his hands and cursed.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE SECRET PANEL.

"Ah! said the great Doge, calming himself, "a man, yet a vampire; a vampire, yet human."

Vincent took him gently by the arm and led him from the balcony. In low tones he told the Doge how Sforza had sought to get possession of Sylva, how he had even carried her from the palace, a story which the girl had not breathed to her father in completeness. Marino Faliero listened with compressed lips.

"Is there no doom for that human vulture?" exclaimed the Doge.

"He is in the shadow of doom at this moment?" responded Vincent, remembering what the tenant of the House of Crime had told him. "I verily believe that the days of the man-bat are numbered."

A grim smile overspread Faliero's face and he bowed his head.

Escape for the Doge seemed impossible. He had plotted for more power, and seemed to be reaping but the whirlwind. He sent messages to his generals, but word came back that they were not disposed to obey his commands.

"They are in the pay of the Ten!" exclaimed Faliero.

When the two had re-entered the main part of the ducal palace, they beheld the Lady Sylva dressed in her richest robes. She held a sword in one hand, and looked more beautiful than ever.

"What means this, my child?" cried the Doge, at sight of her.

"I am prepared to share the fortunes of my august father," was the reply.

"It may mean death," said the Doge, sadly.

"Then death it shall be!"

Quitting the presence of father and daughter, Vincent moved away and went to the grand staircase, which terminated at the bank of the Lagoon. The guards opened the massive doors for him, and he stepped outside. A figure bounded up from the steps. It was Beppo.

"You have been among the tigers?" cried Vincent, at sight of the dwarf.

"Aye, master," was the reply.

"What news, then?"

"They are going to force their way into the palace. It is the command of the Ten."

"Who leads them?"

"Giovanna Mafizi."

"The reprobate of Venice," cried Vincent, through his teeth.

Beppo reached underneath his doublet and produced a stiletto.

"This for Giovanna!" he hissed, showing Vincent the glittering blade.

They repaired back into the palace, and Sylva met them in one of the main halls. She was composed as though she were dressed for a night fete on the Lagoon.

"Is it quiet without?" she said.

"The quiet before the tempest," answered Vincent. "Beppo says they will force the palace."

"The Doge must go to the secret tunnel," was the quick answer. "It leads to the private wharf. Mayhap the conspirators have not guarded it."

They rushed into the presence of the Doge. He listened to their entreaties with calm face.

"It is too late," said he. "They have guarded every exit. I am sure of this."

One of the guards came running up with a blanched face.

"They have come!" cried he. "They have landed at the foot of the great stairway."

"What did I tell you?" exclaimed Faliero, turning to Vincent and Sylva.

"All the doors are secured," the girl said. "I have seen that they are double bolted."

"And the guards?"

"I have sworn every one to remain here to the last moment. They are armed with the best weapons of the ducal armory. I saw to the arming myself."

Faliero took her in his arms and kissed her.

"You are a true Faliero!" cried he. "You are worthy of your great ancestors."

Sylva smiled proudly and returned her father's embrace. A sound that startled all now rang through the corridor.

"They are here!" exclaimed the Doge.

He walked with stately step to the end of the hall and placed his lips against the portal.

"Open in the name of the Great Council!" said a voice outside.

"I am the Doge, and this is the ducal palace." was the reply.

Marino Faliero knew that the door would withstand all assaults, that if he had no traitors within, he could hold the palace for some time against his enemies.

"Will you not obey?" came to the ears of every one.

There was no answer.

Suddenly Beppo reappeared. "There is traitor within!" he shouted, as he came up. "The miscreants have entered from the western facade."

Cheeks blanched and swords were gripped anew.

"How many have entered?" he was asked.

"But three so far."

"Lead me to the spot," cried Vincent, and the next moment he was following Beppo down the aisle.

It was true. Three dark figures were observed among the shadows of the corridor, and the young Englishman went at them with the impetuosity of a Nemean lion. He sent one to the floor with a good thrust, and the others, seeing his courage and strength, fell back. He drove them from the palace.

"Quick! the door!" he shouted to Beppo, and the dwarf, whose strength was prodigious, threw himself against the heavy portal.

They shut it between them, and Beppo shot the bolt which some traitor had withdrawn. At this moment loud cries fell upon their ears, and they hastened back to where they had left the Doge and his daughter.

"We are surely betrayed," exclaimed Faliero. "The tigers are in the palace!"

All now ran to the audience chamber, and the Doge closed the door, placing upon it the ducal seal.

"It is the rankest treason for any one to break the seal," he said, with a look at Vincent.

"What care men like Raphael for that?" said Sylva.

Presently a secret panel slid aside in the wall and a menial entered. He carried a letter in his hand.

"For the Lady Sylva," he said, extending it toward the Doge's daughter.

The girl took it with a whitened face and broke the silver seal. Her eyes read the contents in a moment, and her face seemed to grow whiter than ever, for the letter ran as follows:

"To the Gracious Lady Sylva:—Your father can be saved if you will but save him. The vengeance of the populace will be thwarted if you have a heart within your bosom. Become my wife, and the power of the Great Tribunal, as it pertains to Marino Faliero, will be powerless. I await your answer.

"RAPHAEL SFORZA."

Sylva looked up at the menial who stood in the middle of the floor.

"How came you by this?" she demanded.

"I found it but now on the balcony."

"And the reply is to be sent below?"

"Yes, I think so, mistress."

"Then here it is!" cried the girl and she tore the letter in twain and handed it to the messenger.

"Better death than life at such cost," came from between her welded lips, as she bestowed a loving look upon Vincent. He did not ask to know the contents of the infamous letter, but his heart guessed them.

Ten minutes later there arose throughout the palace shouts and cries of conflict. They could have but one meaning; the tigers of the Ten were in the nest.

"Now!" said the Doge, as he turned upon the young couple. "The time has come. You must remain no longer. They dare not slay the Doge in the palace. Since the Ten demands his person, he has a right to appear before the Tribunal."

Vincent raised his hand.

"No!" sternly cried Marino Faliero. "It must not be. Here is the secret way to safety for you." He touched a spring set in the marble wall and a panel slid back. "This will lead you to the secret entrance which I had made recently. It debouches into the little dark street of La Cruza. From thence you can make your way——"

"Whither?" interrupted Vincent.

"To the House of the Crime, the home of the ghostly White Duchess."

"But, father——"

"Nay, I will not have it otherwise. Go, my child belongs to you, Vincent. Now, may St. Mark watch over you?"

He pushed Vincent and Sylva into the secret tunnel and closed the panel behind them.

CHAPTER XX.

THE VAMPIRE'S DOOM.

It was the night after the exciting events just recorded, and yet Vincent and Lady Sylva had not appeared at the House of the Crime! Startling actions had succeeded them. Marino Faliero had fallen into the power of the Ten.

When the young lovers entered the secret tunnel, they found themselves in almost Stygien gloom. They followed the dark corridor to an iron door, which Vincent opened, taking a look outside. He heard the tumult which still pervaded the city. His position was not discovered, and before long he learned that the Doge was in the toils.

It was dangerous to venture out, and so they concluded to spend the night in the subterranean place until another darkness, when they could quit it for the hiding-place. There was less peril in remaining, for the excitement would gradually subside, and the people would be waiting for the Doge's trial.

Vincent regretted that he had been forced from the Doge's presence, for he believed that his good sword could have rendered great assistance at the last moment.

"What did you mean," asked Sylva, "when you told my father that the doom of the man-bat was near at hand?"

"I cannot tell you all now, love," was the reply. "When we are in the House of the Crime you will know all."

"I shall not regret to hear of the end of that monster," Sylva answered. "Of all the villains who ever infested Venice, he is the greatest."

"And he will richly deserve the doom that is sure to overtake him,"

The Doge's daughter drew near to her lover with a shudder.

"There is one secret of the ducal palace which I am sure you have not noted," said she.

"What is that, dearest?"

"Old Donati is dead in his room. I came upon his body but a few hours ago and found him dead in his chair."

"Murdered?"

"By his own hand, I am sure. I found a phial on the floor at his feet. It contained a few drops of a white liquid, the sight of which sent a chill coursing through my blood. I have heard of that terrible draught. It is called the White Death of Naples."

"The same by which the Duchess who haunts the House of the Crime took her life."

"I have heard of her," returned Sylva. "Is the house really haunted?"

Vincent recollected his strange adventures in the place and looked away.

"Keep your secret, then," whispered Sylva.

All next day they remained in the hidden tunnel, but when night once more cast her starry curtain over the Queen of the Adriatic, they ventured forth. They had not gone far when a little figure rose before them. It was Beppo, the dwarf. Sylva recoiled with a cry, and Vincent drew his sword. The eyes of the little man glittered like diamonds.

"There are few secrets which Beppo does not know," he grinned. "He knew of the tunnel."

"And you came to the mouth of it to succor us if we needed succor?" smiled Sylva.

"Yes, mistress. Beppo is ready at any time to die for you. But have you heard? Raphael Sforza is missing."

This information was received by the lovers with exclamations of astonishment.

"They are scouring the city for him," proceeded the dwarf. "They have searched the Sforza palace, for he is said to be foremost in accusing the Doge, and is wanted in the council chamber of the Ten."

"And he cannot be found?"

"He has vanished as vanish the mists of the Adriatic before the glorious sun," answered Beppo.

"It is very strange," said Lady Sylva.

"Methinks," added Vincent, "that he would be the last person to vanish at this time. Perchance he has clothed himself in his bat's dress and is playing that hideous role somewhere."

The dwarf shook his head.

"It is all mystery to Beppo," said he. "I only wish I could find the man-bat," and he laid his hand significantly upon the iron hilt of his stiletto. "Whither art thou going?"

"To the House of the Crime, Beppo."

"And may Beppo go with you?"

"You may," answered Sylva. "We may have need of you there."

After threading the streets adjacent to the Grand Canal, and keeping within the shadows, the little party reached the rendezvous. Everything was deathlike about it. Vincent tried the door and it opened at his touch.

"Perchance," whispered the Doge's daughter, "we may see the White Duchess."

"Or the living incarnation of vengeance," returned Vincent.

Not a sound that indicated that the house was inhabited came to their ears.

"Remain here," said Vincent, addressing Lady Sylva. "Beppo and I will run through the house."

The Doge's daughter sank into a chair in the largest room and sighed. Vincent and the dwarf slipped away and began their tour of the strange place. They went from room to room, the dwarf now and then giving vent to utterances of surprise.

"There is one apartment which we have not yet visited," said the young Englishman. "It is under the house, as it were."

"Lead the way," returned Beppo. "Venice is a city of mysteries."

Vincent descended the steps, down which he had already followed the self-exiled Duches of Sforza. He found the way without difficulty. All at once Beppo grasped his arm.

"Something tells me, master," said the dwarf in a low and half-frightened voice, "that beyond that door is something terrible."

Vincent laughed at his comrade's fears.

"Why should there be?" cried he.

"I know not, but there is a mystery beyond the portal."

Vincent opened the door and saw gloom ahead.

"It is only darkness, Beppo," said he. "You are not afraid of that?"

He pushed the little Venetian forward.

"Master! master!" rang out the voice of Beppo. "What is this thing in the chair?"

Vincent struck a light by means of his tinder box and leaned outward. As the light flared up, he uttered a cry and recoiled. There in a gilded chair sat a thing that under any circumstances would have driven one's blood cold through his veins.

"It is a bat," cried Beppo.

The dwarf fell back with his hand trembling at the hilt of his weapon.

"Fear not the dead," said Vincent.

"But the head, the wings, master!" wailed the dwarf, in his terror.

"Pull the mask from the face, Beppo."

The dwarf put out his hands, seeing his master's coolness, and jerked away the vampirish covering of the object in the gilded chair.

"Santissima!" cried the little man. "'Tis the Duke of Sforza!" It was so.

"But look! look!" exclaimed Beppo. "See the stiletto buried in the man-bat's heart!"

"And behold the glove which the doer of the deed hath left on the table."

At the same time Vincent picked up the object which had caught his gaze. A faint and singular perfume arose from the glove.

"Oh," cried Beppo. "It is the fragrance of the Sforzas!"

One thing was plain to Vincent. Sforza in some manner had been decoyed to the House of the Crime by his avenging wife, and she had kept her secret vow with the stiletto.

Days passed away. Marino Faliero was condemned by the Ten, and his head fell before the ax of the public executioner on the piazzette. But before he perished, he pronounced a curse upon Venice, telling her of the doom which would overtake the dream city of the Adriatic, and, though years waned before his prophecy was fulfilled, it came at last.

Vincent and Lady Sylva escaped to England, where, from the day of their landing, the sun shone upon their lives, and never a cloud came to obscure its brightness.

Fiamma, who was cast from the Black Gondola for attempting the life of the head of the Ten, avoided the doom selected for her, and she lived to sing the songs of her native land to Sylva's children.

The Vampire of Venice was left where he was found, and to this day the City of the Doges knows nothing of the tragic manner of his taking off.

The End.

Addington Peace, Detective;

Or, THE TERROR IN THE SNOW

By B. Fletcher Robinson

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PART II.

BEFORE the big garden porch the great detective's two companions were waiting. He drew them aside for a minute's whispered conversation before they separated, and disappeared into the night. What had they done with the body? I had not the courage to inquire.

We entered the house, moving very softly. In the hall Peace took me by the arm.

"You're a bit shaken, Mr. Phillips, and I'm not surprised. But I want your assistance badly. Can you pull yourself together and help me to see this through?

"I'll do what I can."

"Take me up to your room, then."

We were in luck, for we tiptoed up the great stairs and down the long passages without meeting a guest or servant. Once in my room, the inspector walked across and pushed the electric bell. Three, four minutes went by before the summons was answered, and then it was by a flushed and disordered footman, who bounced into the room and halted, staring open-mouthed from me to my companion.

"Sorry to disturb your dance," said Peace, beaming upon him.

"Beg pardon, sir, but you startled me—yes, we was 'aving a little dance in the servants' 'all; but it's of no consequence, sir."

"A slippery floor, eh, with so much French chalk on it?"

The young man glanced at the powder on his shoes and grinned.

"So you are all dancing in the servants' hall, are you?"

"I believe so, sir, barring Edward, who is waiting on the party, and Mr. Henderson."

"And where is Mr. Henderson?"

"He is the baron's man, sir. I should not presume to inquire where he was. Beg pardon, sir, but are you staying here tonight?"

"This is a friend of mine," I interposed. "He will stay the night; but you need not trouble about that now."

"A smart fellow like you can keep his mouth shut," continued the inspector, sweetly. "You wouldn't go shouting all over the house if you were let into a secret—now, would you?"

"Oh, no, sir; on my word I wouldn't."

And so Peace told him of the projected arrest, of the murder, and of his own identity. The color faded from the young man's cheeks, but he stood stiff and silent, never taking his eyes from the little detective's face.

"And what can I do, sir?" he asked, when the tale was over. "He was a good master to us, sir; whatever there was against him, he was good to us. You can trust me to help catch the scoundrel who killed him if I can."

"I see this room is warmed by steam heat. Is that the case with all the bedrooms and passages?

"Yes, sir. The only open fires are in the reception rooms. When the baron made the alterations last year, they left the grates for the sake of appearance; but they are never lighted, save on the ground floor."

"And in what reception rooms are there fires at the present moment?"

"The dining room fire has died out by now," said the young man, ticking off the numbers on his fingers. "But there is one in the big hall, one in the library where the party is playing, one in the little drawingroom, and one in the baron's room."

"And the kitchen?"

"Of course, sir, one in the kitchen and one in the servants' hall."

"That is all. Are you certain?"

"Quite certain, sir."

"Good; and now for the bathrooms."

"The bathrooms, sir?"

"Exactly."

"There are two bathrooms in each wing; some of the gentlemen have tubs in their own rooms besides."

"Now, I think we know where we are," said the inspector, briskly. "No chance of the roulette party breaking up, is there?"

'Oh no, sir; not for another two hours, at least."

"I want you to return, Mr. Phillips, and try your luck at the tables for a spell," he said, with a quick glance at me. "It is now 11:30; be back in this room at 12:15. I am going to take a walk around the house with our young friend here in the meantime. The baron had a secretary, I believe?"

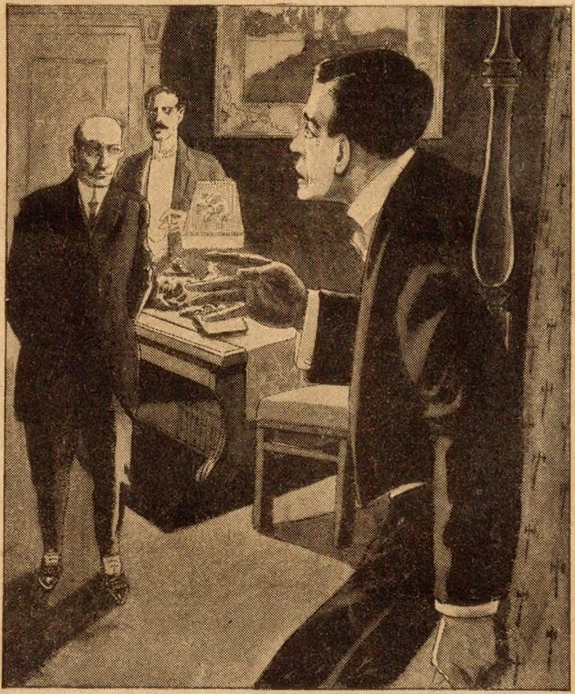
"Yes, a man called Terry."

"Bring him up with you when you come. I shall want a talk with him. Is all quite plain?"

"Yes," I told him; and so we parted.

When I stepped into the roulette-room I stood for a moment blinking at the players like a yokel at a pantomime. The scene was to me something unreal, a clever piece of stage effect, with its flushed and covetous faces, its frocks and its diamonds, its piles of sparkling gold, and the cry of the banker as he twirled the wheel. How could they be doing this with that bloodstained patch on the cliff edge, with that unknown horror slinking through the snow—how could they be doing this if they were not acting a part! An odd figure I must have looked, if there had been any one to notice me. But they were too eager in the game to hear the opening of the door, or to see who went and came. I walked over to the fireplace, lit a cigarette, and watched them, my nerves growing steadier in the merry clatter of tongues. They were all there, the men and women of that careless house-party, all there—save one who lay silent wherever they had laid him.

Half an hour had slipped by, until, at last, with an effort, I walked to the table and threw down two sovereigns on the red.



"Not tonight! Don't ask me tonight!"

It won, and I laughed at the melancholy omen; not, perhaps, without an odd note in my voice, for the man over whose shoulder I leaned to gather my winnings glanced up with a startled expression. It was young Terry, the secretary; the very person I wanted to see.

"Anything the matter, Mr. Phillips?" he asked. "You're not looking very well."

"Don't worry about me," I told him. "But I want a word with you in private."

"Certainly—just one moment."

He had been winning heavily, and it took him some time to crowd the bank notes into his pockets. A sovereign slipped from his fingers and rolled under the table as he rose, but he paid no attention to it.

"I have something to tell you. Can you come to my room?" I asked him.

He hesitated, looking regretfully at the table, where Fortune had been so kind to him.

"It happens to be rather important," I said.

He followed me without another word. I did not attempt to explain until we had passed up the stairs and through the corridors to my room. He seated himself on the great bed with a shiver of cold, drawing the heavy curtains about his shoulders. And there I told him the story from the beginning to the end, hiding nothing, not even my belief in the supernatural nature of the thing which I had seen.

He never moved, but his face grew so pale and drawn that toward the end it seemed as if it were a powdered mask that stared at me from the shadows of the curtains.

"My God!" he cried, and fell back upon the bed in a passion of hysterical tears.

I tried to help him, but he thrust me fiercely away, so I thought it best to let him get over it himself. He was still lying on the thick quilt, sobbing and shivering, when the door opened and Peace stepped into the room. I explained the situation in a hurried whisper; but when I turned again Terry had got to his feet and was watching us, clinging to the bedpost.

"This is Inspector Addington Peace," I told him. "Perhaps you can give him some information?"

"Not tonight," he cried. "Don't ask me tonight, gentlemen. You cannot tell what this means to me; tomorrow, perhaps——"

He dropped down upon the bed, covering his face with his hands. He seemed a helpless sort of creature, and my heart went out to him in his calamity.

"A night's rest is what you want," I said, patting him on the shoulder. "Come, let me give you an arm."

He took it at once, with a grateful glance, and I led him down the corridor, with Peace in sympathetic attendance. Fortunately, his room was in the same wing, so we had not far to go. When we reached it, he thanked us for our care of him. And so we left him, returning to my bedroom in silence, for, indeed, the scene had been a painful one.

"Peace," I said, when the door had closed behind us, "what was the thing I saw in the yew walk?"

He had seated himself in an easy-chair, and was polishing the bowl of a well-stained meerschaum pipe with a silk pocket handkerchief.

"I think you already have an explanation," he answered cheerfully.

"If it amuses you to sneer at my superstition——"

"You refer to the legend of the De Launes. I have heard the story before, Mr. Phillips; nor am I surprised that you believe it to be the ghost wolf."

"I did—but now I want you to disprove it."

"On the contrary, all my evidence supports your theory."

I stared at him, with a creeping horror in my blood. I was beginning to be afraid—seriously afraid. Peace leaned back in his chair, with his eyes, vacant in expression, fixed on the wall. He seemed rather to be arguing with himself than addressing a listener.

"Baron Steen," he said, "met with his death on an open path between a shallow duck-pond and a little pavilion. He had fought hard for life, had rolled and struggled with his enemy. There were four or five punctured wounds in his throat and neck, from which he had bled profusely. And now for the thing that killed him—whatever it was. It could not have fled down the cliff path, for the boat's crew waiting below had heard the screams, and had come running up by that way. They were with him when we arrived, and assured me they had seen nothing. It could not have turned to the right or left, for, though the paths had been swept clean—doubtless by the baron's orders, for he would not desire his way of escape to be easily traced—the snow on either side lay in unbroken levels. It could only have retired by the yew avenue, and it did not break through the hedge. That, again, the snow proved clearly. So, we may take it, that whatever the thing may have been which you saw—it killed Baron Steen; further, it escaped into the house—this, you will remember, we decided in the garden. Let us imagine it was a man—that you were deceived by the uncertain light. His clothes must of necessity have been drenched in blood. He could not have struggled so fiercely with his victim and escaped those fatal signs. Yet, he cannot have burned his clothes, for the fires are downstairs where people were passing. Nor can he have washed them, for neither the bathrooms nor the bedroom basins have been recently used. I have spent some time in searching boxes and wardrobes with no result. Stranger still, as far as my limited information goes, every one in the house can prove an alibi—save two."

"And who are they?" I asked eagerly.

"Mr. Henderson, the baron's valet—and yourself."

"Inspector Peace——" I began, angrily.

"Tut, tut, my dear Mr. Phillips. I was merely stating the facts. Mr. Henderson's case, however, presents an interesting feature, for he has run away."

"Run away," I said. "Then that settles it."

"Not altogether, I'm afraid. I think it is more a matter of theft than murder with Mr. Henderson."

I stared at him in silence as he sat there, with his little hands clasped upon his lap, a picture of irritating composure.

"Peace," I said, struggling to control my voice. "What are you hiding from me? It is something inhuman, unnatural that has done this dreadful thing."

The little detective stretched himself, yawned, and then rose to his feet.

"I have no opinion except that I think you had better go to bed. Don't lock your door, for I may find time for an hour's sleep on your sofa before morning."

* * * * *

The news was out after breakfast—the news that led to mild hysterics and scurrying of lady's-maids to the packing of boxes, and the chastened sorrow of those gentlemen who owed the baron money. Through all the turmoil of the morning moved the little detective, the most sympathetic of men. It was he who apologized so humbly for the locked doors of the bathrooms; he who superintended the lighting of fires, and the making of the beds, and the packing of trunks for the station so closely that the housemaids were convinced that he entertained a secret passion for each one of them; it was he who announced Henderson's robbery of the gold plate, following it by information as to the culprit's arrest. The establishment had by this time become convinced that Henderson was the murderer, and breathed relief at the news.

They had brought the body of Baron Steen to the house early in the morning—it had been laid in the garden pavilion on its first discovery.

With death in so strange a form present among us, I was disgusted by the noise and bustle, the gossip and chatter amongst the guests of the dead man. I wandered off in search of the one person who had seemed sincerely affected by the news, the young secretary, Maurice Terry. He was nowhere to be found. A servant of whom I inquired told me that the secretary had kept to his bed, being greatly unnerved by the tragedy, and I strolled up the stairs again on an errand of consolation. The door was locked, and there came no answer to my continued tapping.

"Terry," I called through the keyhole. "It is I, Phillips; won't you let me in?"

"I have a key that will fit, if you will kindly stand aside," suggested a modest voice.

I rose from my knees to find the detective at my elbow.

"It would be a gross intrusion," I told him. "If he wishes to be alone with his sorrow, we have no right to disturb him."

"He is seriously ill."

"How did you discover that?"

"By borrowing a gardener's ladder and looking through his window. He is unconscious, or was ten minutes ago."

A skilful twist or two with a bit of wire and the key was pushed from the lock. The duplicate opened the door. Peace walked into the room, and I followed at his heels.

On his bed, fully dressed, lay poor Terry, with a face paler than his pillows. His breath came and went in short, painful gasps. One hand strayed continu-

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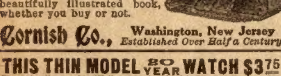

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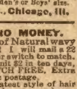

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ously about his throat, groping and plucking at his collar with feverish unrest. It was a very painful spectacle.

"I will send for a doctor at once," I whispered, stepping to the bell. But Peace held up a warning hand.

"Come here," he said. "I have something to show you."

With movements as tender as a woman's he unfastened the man's collar and slipped out the stud. Then he paused. The eyes that watched me had turned cold and hard.

"If it is as I suspect, you may be called as a witness. Do you object?"

"Yes, but I shall not leave you on that account."

"Very well," he said, as he opened the shirt and the vest beneath it.

Smeared and patched in dark etching upon the white skin was a broad stain of blood, of dried and clotted blood, the life's blood of a man.

"He is wounded, Peace," I cried. "Poor fellow, he must have nearly bled to death."

"Do not alarm yourself," said the inspector, dryly. "It is the blood of Baron Steen."

* * * * *

A week had gone by, and I was sitting alone in my Keble street rooms, when Peace walked in, with a heavy traveling coat over his arm.

"Thank, Heaven, you have come at last," I cried. "How is Maurice Terry?"

"Dead—poor fellow," he said, with an honest sorrow in his voice. "Yet, after all, Mr. Phillips, it was the best that could have happened to him."

"And his story—the causes—the method?" I demanded.

"It has taken some hard work, but the bits of the puzzle are fitted together at last. You wish to hear it, I suppose?"

"According to your promise," I reminded him.

"It is a case of unusual interest," he said. "Though it bears a certain similarity to the Gottstein trial at Kiel in '89."

He paused to light his big pipe, and then sat back in his chair, with his eyes fixed in abstract contemplation.

"I was convinced that the murderer was in the house; and that he had entered by the side door, toward which you had seen him pass. When studying the spot I made a discovery of some importance. Steen had left by the same exit. Also he had reason to fear some person in that wing, for he had turned from the path and made a circuit over the grass. I had already noted his broad-toed shoes when examining his body—and the footprints in the snow were unmistakable. Who was his enemy in that wing? It was a problem to be solved.

"I discovered no stained clothing, and no signs of its cleansing or destruction. From what information I could gather, all the house party had been in the roulette-room save you yourself; and all the servants had been at the dance save Henderson and a man waiting on the guests. But in the course of my search the footman who accompanied me discovered that a quantity of gold plate was missing. It was reasonable to imagine that Henderson was the thief. Probably the confidential valet had learned of the baron's projected flight and of the warrant for his arrest. It was a moment for judicious robbery, the traces of which would be covered by the confusion of the news. But was Henderson also a murderer? I did not think so. The death of his master was the one thing which would wreck his scheme. In the early morning I interviewed the farmer on whose car he had driven into Norbridge. He told me that, acting on orders he had received from Henderson, he met that person at the corner of the stables at eleven o'clock precisely—five minutes before the murder occurred. That finally eliminated the valet from the list.

"On my return from the farm I examined the gardens again with great minuteness. At the corner of the little pavilion, about fifteen feet from where the body had lain, there was a patch of bloody snow. This puzzled me a good deal, until the solution offered itself that the murderer had tried to wash his hands in the snow, the water of the pond being frozen hard. Yet his clothing would also bear the stain. What had he worn that showed so white to you in the starlight? Could it have been that he wore no clothes at all?

"A naked man! The suggestion was full of possibilities.

"It was fortunate that I had brought assistants to help me in Steen's capture. Their presence gave me a wider scope, for they were both good men. I left them to search the pavilion and laurels for the clothing, which the murderer might have concealed when he realized how fatal was its evidence. As I walked back to the house I began to understand the situation more clearly. The main drive, curving down the slope of the park, was in view of a tall man coming up by the yew walk. The murderer might have noticed our approach. What more natural than that he should have bent double as he ran, thus obtaining the cover of the left-hand hedge, which was not more than four to five feet high? Did not this answer to your description of the thing you had seen? It would have been cold work for him. I made a note to be on the look-out for chills.

"For a couple of hours I devoted myself to speeding those guests who caught the eleven-thirty train. I do not think a trunk left for the station of which I have not a complete inventory. Indeed, the baron's creditors have to thank me for the return of several trifles of value, wihch were included, accidentally, no doubt, in the ladies' dressing-bags.

"After the carriage had started I went in search of Terry, and discovered that he had left his room. Equally to the point, his windows looked down upon the spot where the baron made his detour over the grass while escaping. I became interested in this young man. The score was creeping up against him. A ladder from an obliging gardener allowed me to observe him from the window. A visit to the housekeeper gave me a duplicate key to his door. What happened in the room you know, Mr. Phillips."

"But, the motive—why did he kill his patron?" I asked him eagerly.

"I doubt if we shall ever learn the truth on that point," he said. "As far as I can make out, Steen was directly responsible for the ruin and disgrace of Terry's father. Probably the son did not fully realize this when the baron, with a pity most unusual in the man, gave him the secretaryship. But of all participation in the flight he was certainly innocent, for he was in bed at the time."

"In bed!" I cried.

"Don't interrupt, if you please. What happened I take to be as follows: Terry was in bed when the old man tried to creep past his window. Somehow he heard him, and, looking out, understood what was up. Perhaps that rascal Henderson had told him the truth about his father; perhaps Steen had promised him compensation—he had a mother and sister dependent on him—which promise the financier meant to avoid, along with many more serious obligations, by running away. At any rate, passion, revenge, the sense of injustice—call it what you like—took hold of the lad. He caught up the first handy weapon; it chanced to be a dagger paper-knife—dangerous things, I hate them—and rushed down a back staircase and through the side door in pursuit of his enemy.

"When that had happened, which happened, the fear that comes to all amateurs in crime took him by the throat. He wiped his hands in the snow; he tore off his sleeping suit—that is how I know he had been in bed—and thrust it, with its terrible evidences of murder, into the thatch of the little pavilion. We found it there a day later. Then he started back to the house as naked as a baby.

"He saw us running down the hill, and made for the side door, bending double behind the hedge. Who were we? Had we noticed him? Believe me, Mr. Phillips, whether he had held the murder righteous or no, it was only the rope he saw dangling before him. Might not the alarm be given at any moment? He dared not wash himself, and the stains had dried upon him. He hurried on his clothes, shivering in the chill that had struck home, and so to the safest place he could find—the roulette-table."

"It is well that he died. I said simply.

"It saved the law some trouble," remarked the inspector, with a grim little nod at the wall.

The end.

❧ ❧ ❧

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"Oh, thank you, sir," tremblingly replied the man who had been working for years on a salary that was barely sufficient to enable him to live in decent comfort. "I don't know how I can find words to fittingly express my gratitude. I can only hope that my work in the future will be such as to convince you that your generosity is fully appreciated."

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❧ ❧ ❧

Why She Blushed.

A very pretty but extremely slender girl entered a street car and managed to seat herself in a very narrow space between two men. Presently a portly colored mamma entered the car, and the pretty miss, thinking to humiliate the men for their lack of gallantry, arose.

"Aunty," she said, with a wave of her hand toward the place she had just vacated, "take my seat."

"Thank you, missy," replied the colored woman, smiling broadly; "but which gen'man's lap was you sittin' on?"—Judge.

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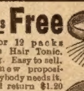

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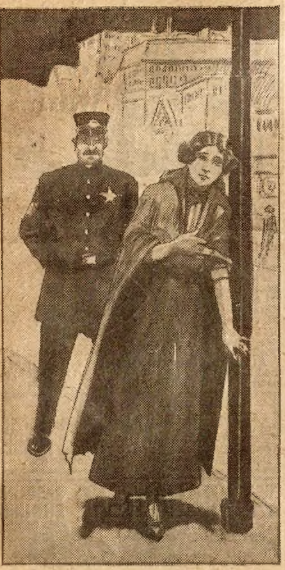

She stopped on the curb.

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CHAPTER XVII.

A MEETING IN THE DARK.

FIVE miles from Holt there is a tank station on a railroad line which forms a junction, eight miles below, with a trunk line leading to the home city of the Star. The promoters of this tank station road had at one time fondly dreamed of forcing the town of Holt to move over to it, but the owners of property in that city had proved obstinate and so the line got little patronage from that thriving town.

Two nights after the disappearance of Ruth Holme from the Alden House at Holt, a heavy farm wagon drove up to the right of way opposite the shaky platform of the tank station, and a woman in a long cloak and hood stepped out. She did not enter the ten-by-twelve shelter which stood near the watering tank, although the glow on the one window showed that there was warmth inside, but she stood on the side of the wagon farthest from the track, which was between the country road and the shelter and the tank.

The wind, blowing fiercely down the sloping field which surrounded the station, caused the woman who had alighted to shiver and huddle closer in the folds of the cloak, seeing which, another woman sprang from the wagon and wrapped her shoulders in a great woolen shawl.

"My," exclaimed the second woman, "you're shakin' fit to loosen your teeth. Keep this shawl until you get home. You can send it back by express."

"But you will need it more than I," said the other. "I shall soon be in a warm coach, you know."

She spoke with a tremulous note in her voice, and ended by dropping her face into her hands. Then it was not the chill wind which shook her slender figure.

"There," said the other, "the train will be along in a minute or two, and you mustn't give 'way. Remember what Si told you, dear? You must get up from this side, and remain on the steps until the train moves out, so as not to open any doors. Then, when the train is under way again, you can go into a car just as if you were changing coaches. I don't think all these precautions at all necessary, for there ain't a soul in sight here, but Si's as steady a hand as I ever hired, made the plans, and we'll carry 'em out."

As the woman ceased speaking a voice called out from the door of the little house across the tracks, and a square light reddened the rails as a lantern was brought forward. Then two men stepped out of the shadow of the house and advanced toward the wagon.

"Hello!" the voice repeated. "Who is it?"

"Is that you, Harm Beers?" asked the woman who had alighted from the wagon last.

"Oh, it is Mother Harmon, eh?" said the man in the doorway. "Why don't you come in an' get warm?"

"Comin' in a minute!" was the reply.

"Expectin' some one?" asked the station agent.

"Didn't know but Samanthy Gillet, she that was Samanthy Roberts, might be along tonight," was the reply. "She's been countin' on coming for a week's visit for a long time."

Then the speaker toward turned the station house, but before she left the dark side of the wagon she whispered to the other:

"Now, keep your wits about you. I'll keep 'em all lookin' at me when the train stops, an' you get aboard. Write when you get to town, and if you're out this way again you know where I live. Good-by, dear!"

The woman was gone, and Ruth clung to the wagon in a passion of terror and grief. On the night of her escape from the Alden House she had started to walk into the open country, thinking that safer than the city streets, and, after a long, cold tramp, had been picked up by Mrs. Harmon, the widow owner of a large farm near the tank station. When taken into the wagon by the kind-hearted woman, Ruth had been weak from chill and fright, and the widow had insisted on taking her home with her.

On the way Ruth had told her story, and Mother Harmon, as she was called by all the countryside, had vowed in emphatic language that no one should find the girl while in her care. And so, while the search for her was raging hot at Holt, while friend and enemy alike were scouring the hotels and boarding-houses, and even the private residences, of the city for the missing girl, she lay in a cozy room at the top of the Harmon farmhouse.

Only that she considered herself safer in the city, the girl might have remained in her retreat for some weeks, or until the newspapers—which the widow secured daily—announced the finding of her father. She was, of course, anxious about her father, but she knew that her poor efforts would be of small avail in the quest for him. She did not know that a powerful influence was already doing all that could be done for the recovery of the missing man—the powerful influence of the Daily Star.

Mrs. Harmon had reluctantly consented to her departure, only with the understanding that she should be permitted to supply the unfortunate child with money for her immediate needs, "to be returned, with interest, when the suits are settled," as she had stated by way of further inducement.

So Ruth had started out for the city, and the train she was to take surreptitiously was in sight a few rods away. As the light from the great reflector shown down the track, the two men, whom the opening of the shelter door had momentarily revealed, stepped across the line and advanced toward the wagon. Ruth shrank down out of sight, but one of the men stepped close to her and laid a hand on her shoulder.

"Where are you going?" he asked.

Ruth shook the hand away angrily.

"I am waiting for a friend who is coming on the train," she fibbed.

"Oh, that's all right," the other said. We've been waiting for some girl who was expecting a friend to come on the train. There's another chap waiting on the right of way, too, so you'd better make a noise like a brass Indian and keep out of sight. Here comes the choo-choo, so you get ready to climb on."

"Who are you?" asked the girl, shivering. "Why do you interfere with me?"

After all the care that had been taken to insure her escape from that part of the country, it would be tragic to be detained now.

"I'm Quick," was the surprising answer, "O. Ketchum Quick, dramatist and reporter for the Star. This," indicating his companion, "is Marlow, same-sheet. We've been looking for you all day. Got to Holt last night and just happened to blunder over here in the search. I'm a child of fortune, anyway. Climb on!"

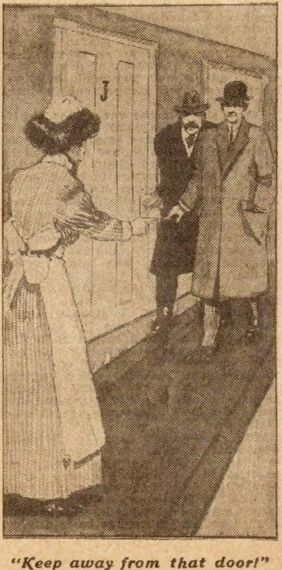
Quick and Marlow had indeed been making a quiet search for the girl. When they had reached Holt twenty-four hours back, they had found Schobey and Harley still there, also Jennie and Jean, all at a loss to account for the strange disappearance of the girl.

Their orders, it will be remembered, were to find Ruth Holme and take her to some secure hiding-place, outside of the probable zone of search, and to keep her there until Angell, in response to instructions from the managing editor, ordered her released. Why this heartless course was to be pursued, the reader already knows.

However, because Quick had overheard that conversation between Angell and the managing editor in the Star office that night, the reporters were not planning to follow instructions. They had, in fact, plans of their own, which included the tracing of the girl to her lodgings in the city, or to whatever place she went, without seeming to do so.

Ruth was not at all certain that she ought not to abandon her departure and again seek the shelter of the farmhouse. Then she saw a figure she recognized as that of the detective, Schobey, passing around the end of the last coach and mounted the steps. In a moment the train moved out, and Ruth entered the coach, to find most of the passengers trying to sleep. She tried to sleep, too, but could not. Her mind was too busy with all the events that had come to her since that night of the storm on the coast of Maine.

She remembered, gratefully, that, hard as her lot had been, she had always found friends in her hour of need. Harley, the reporter, had come to her in the room in Holborn cout; Nellie, that strange though kind-hearted girl, had taken her out of the street and sheltered her from arrest; Jean and Jennie had protected her to the extent of losing their situations. Mrs. Garland had



"Keep away from that door!"

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"For 3 years I struggled against almost complete exhaustion, getting what relief I could from doctors' tonics. Then in the spring of 1903 I had an attack of la grippe and malaria which left me too weak to continue my work. Medicine failed to give me any relief, a change of climate failed. I thought I should never be able to go back in school again.

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"In three months, more than my usual strength returned, and I had gained 15 pounds in weight.

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warned her at the Alden House; Mrs. Harmon had taken her word for the truth and sheltered her in her own home.

Everywhere, heretofore, she had found friends, but now she could not decided whether she had come upon a friend or an enemy in this odd reporter for the Star. She thought at times, as the train rattled on through the darkness that he might have been sent out at the instigation of Harley, who had shown himself so true a friend on that first miserable night.

Then she remembered that she had seen Harley holding converse with the officer who had followed her from the city, and doubted again. Entirely innocent of any crime, she still held a subconscious obsession that she would be thrown into prison if she did not in some way escape from every person who had been in any way connected with any of the events of the past few days.

As she had fled from the protection of Madame Graves because she seemed to connect her with that disgraceful night at the police station, she now began thinking of a means of flight from the reporters, because they also in a way connected her with the police. She believed that if she could escape from them on arriving in the city, she might lose herself so that no trace would be left.

Nellie's plan to defeat the efforts of her enemies by sending her out with the "Only Girl" combination had not succeeded, because the star had presumed too much on her youth and helpless condition. Now she must try a plan of her own.

In considering this new situation, the girl hoped that no one would in any way suffer because of assistance given her. Both Harley, as well as the Sunday editor, and Jennie and Jean had come to grief because of their championship of her cause, and she devoutly hoped that in future her friends might be spared humiliation because of their kindness to her.

Momentarily expecting to see the Star reporter making his way toward her from the coach door, Ruth, after a time, became rather disappointed because he did not come. She was anxious to know what he would say to her, how he had managed to locate her there, why he seemed to be acting in opposition to the officer who had trailed her from the city.

She hoped that his conversation would in some way clear up these points for her, and, though she dreaded the moment of his appearance, she was more than anxious that he should come. Presently the train reached the junction, where a train on the main line was waiting.

In making the transfer Ruth saw nothing of the young man who had called himself O. Ketchum Quick, or of the man who had been with him. Far back on the platform she thought she distinguished Harley, but she did not dare remain where she stood then long enough to make sure that it was indeed he.

Much to her disappointment, neither Quick nor Marlow made their appearance in her coach during that long night ride. In the morning she found herself tired and faint. The excitement and the physical strain had been too much for her.

She rode alone all that day, speaking only to a gray-haired lady in the seat in front, who asked her if she were ill. She could not imagine what had taken place at the tank station to prevent the Star men taking the train, as they had expressed their intention of doing. Weak and ill as she was, she would have welcomed even their companionship during the day.

When she left the car at the Central Station, at nine o'clock that night, she seemed to be walking on air. There was a strange buzzing in her ears, and her head felt light and giddy. She had no special place of refuge in mind, so she passed the clamoring 'bus and hack-drivers and moved toward the residence district of the city. At one time she thougt of returning to her old home in Holborn court, and would doubtless have done so, only for the haunting fear that the apartment was being watched by the police.

In order to gain the residence district she thought of returning to her old home the homes of the middle class—Ruth was obliged to pass through the slum district where she had first seen Nellie. As she walked, she observed wonderingly that she was not always on one side of the pavement, that she was staggering about, and that people she passed turned about and gazed after her, some with pity and some with sneering laughter on their lips.

After a time she came to a crossing over which a steady procession of automobiles, vehicles and pedestrians was passing, to say nothing of the surface cars which kept up a discordant clamor of bells. She stopped on the curb and leaned against a lamppost. Her shoulder slipped and she seemed to be falling, but a hand caught her arm, and, turning in affright, she looked into the face of a uniformed officer.

"Got quite a package on, me girl!" the policeman said. "It's you f'r the Judge in the morning. Hey, there!"

This call to another officer who stood not far away.

"Call the wagon!" the arresting officer said. "This girl is too stiff paralyzed to let go of."

The street whirled about the girl, and the noise of its traffic rang like the constant beating of the sea, with no individual sounds apparent. She glanced toward the officer who had been asked to call the police wagon, and saw that he was not doing so.

Instead he stood talking to two young men who were looking at her. The street went round and round again, and the gong of the police wagon seemed to be coming nearer. No; that was the gong of a trolley car, and the vehicle drawing up to the curb was a taxicab. Then some hand helped her into the cushioned seat, and in a second a man was in beside her.

"What is it?" she heard some one on the pavement ask.

"Just a girl with a jag," was the reply.

"Friends of her in there with her?"

"Pshaw, no! They got her away from the copper and will probably take her out for a joy ride. I guess she wasn't as drunk as she pretended to be!"

The taxicab whirled away from the curb, and the voices died out, as did all individual sounds. The last the girl remembered, the red lights of a police station were whirling by!

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE PATIENT IN WARD J.

The long corridor on the second floor of the Shoreham Memorial Hospital was very dim. A turned-down gas-jet was burning at either end, and an electric bulb flamed white near the center, where the annunciator for the patients' bells was fastened to the wall, and where the desk of the night nurse stood.

A heavy, black-haired woman of middle age, clad in a nurse's costume, sat at the desk running folded papers through her hands. There came a tinkle on the board, and the been black eyes of the woman were lifted for a moment. The patient in J was awake and calling.

Instead of arising immediately and answering the call, the nurse renewed her scrutiny of the folded papers in her hands. Presently she dropped all but one on the top of the desk, and opened and read the remaining one.

"If the patient in J calls during the night, call Interne Corwin and Orderly Smith. They have full instructions from the chief surgeon."

That was all. Margaret, the nurse, passed down the corridor to the staircase, ascended another flight, and knocked softly at a door near the landing. Then, without waiting for a response, she traversed the corridor and knocked at another door. There was a slight movement inside, and then a head looked out of a narrow opening.

"J is awake and calling," the nurse said, and turned away.

"Did you call the interne?" asked the man in the doorway.

"Yes; he's been called."

Margaret passed back to the lower corridor and sat down at her desk. The bell on the annunciator jingled again, and she arose and went to J.

There was only a faint light in the sickroom, and the face on the pillow looked haggard and ghastly under it. It was the face of an old man—a kind face, with sympathetic eyes and full, indulgent lips. Not exactly the face which had looked out on the stormy Atlantic or the horrors of Holborn court, but still the faded and anxious face of the same man. The privations and the anxieties of the past few days had changed the face of Malcolm Holme greatly.

The nurse approached the bed and bent over the man, who looked up at her inquiringly for an instant, and then asked, his voice faint and appealing:

"Have you heard from Ruth?"

"My!" said the nurse, kindly. "I don't know anything about the child, but I've sent for some one that does. You lie still; they'll soon be here."

"But——"

The nurse held a stimulating drink to the patient's lips, brushed a wrinkle out of his pillow, and went out. At her desk she met Interne Corwin and Orderly Smith.

"How is he?" asked the interne.

"Conscious," was the reply.

"Does he talk?"

"He asked for his daughter."

"So he remembers?"

The hospital doctor put his hand up to his chin and pondered. That afternoon he had received instructions concerning this patient, the same coming from the chief surgeon.

"When the patient regains consciousness," the chief had said, "whether it is day or night, communicate with Tacoma 9,786, B. Especially if he awakes with his mind clear, lose no time in acting."

"What's doing?" asked the nurse.

"Blessed if I know," the interne replied. "Go and look after the man while I use the 'phone."

"People coming, perhaps?" the nurse suggested.

"I don't know; hope so."

Margaret went into the room again, and the interne passed down the corridor to a telephone booth. Taking up the book he looked for the number.

"Why," he said, in some surprise, "that number is the Star editorial room, the number of the managing editor. I wonder if they want to get a story from the patient in J?"

Interne Corwin took down the receiver, asked for the number, and waited.

(Continued on page fifteen.)

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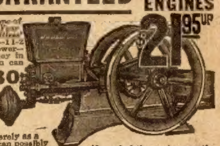

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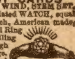

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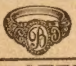

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In a heedless moment the Kingthornes yielded to Jimmy's ardent and vociferous pleas and admitted that it might be possible to permit him to have a dog to play with. Up to that time they had been able to match his teasing by a succinct and comprehensive "No!" But now life was vastly different.

Every homecoming of the elder members of the family, if not greeted by "Didyuh bring my dog?" was hailed with the wail, "When kin I have my dog?" or "Whut kind of a dog is it I'm going to get?" until the Kingthornes reached the stage where their opinion on dogs as a whole was so intense that it was wordless.

The situation led to dissension also, for both Kingthorne and his wife accused the other of having been the one who said the fatal word of assent. The peace of the family was gone, and the more they argued the worse it grew. Of the lot Jimmy was the most injured, for with all the bickering because of a dog there wasn't any dog.

"You said I could have a dog!" he invariably ended in the plaintively accusing tone before which all well brought up parents shrink.

When the Kingthornes had time to look for a dog they never could find an attractive one, and if they did a see a possibility they lacked the time.

Sitting in her livingroom one afternoon, conversing with visitors about green tomato pickles, Mrs. Kingthorne, after staring from the window, gave a little shriek.

"Just the thing!" she cried. "How did it get there?"

"What?" demanded her caller. "There aren't green tomatoes growing out there!"

"Pickles?" repeated Mrs. Kingthorne, dreamily. "No, it's a dog. It doesn't seem to belong to any one, either."

Everybody looked. The dog was most apparently youthful, because it still wabbled slightly when it walked, or, rather, rolled. For it was fat and globular, made still more so by a thick coat of woolly brown fur. From one end of the brown mass a pink nose stuck out and from the other end protruded a tiny plumed tail. He really was too much like an ideal puppy to be quite true.

"There isn't a soul in sight," asserted Mrs. Kingthorne. "And nobody would let a puppy like that go for a walk alone, so it must be lost. It'll get stepped on or stolen or something, and to own it would send Jimmy into hysterics of joy, so, really, I think it is my duty to rescue that puppy, don't you?"

Everybody wanted to see the puppy at close range, so everybody said "Yes." Mrs. Kingthorne went out and brought the animal in.

"Don't dogs have germs and things?" demanded one of the visitors. "It is likely to give Jimmy something, isn't it?"

That was why everybody followed Mrs. Kingthorne down into the laundry to see her give the waif a bath. He was very little and the tub was very big and the soap was exceedingly fluffy, so it took four of them to wash and dry him. Afterward he frisked in front of the grate fire and Mrs. Kingthorne admired herself extremely for finding him.

Jimmy, for some reason, was late, but presently Kingthorne arrived. He seemed a little dazed at the chorus of joyful shrieks and the bundle of brown wool that was thrust at him.

"Well!" he murmured in a puzzled tone. "That doesn't look a bit like the one——"

"That one!" cried Mrs. Kingthorne. "What one, and what is it?"

The bell rang just then and Kingthorne went to the door. When he rejoined them he was leading by a leash an Airedale pup. A grown-up Airedale is without doubt the ugliest dog yet invented, but an Airedale pup transcends by a hundred degrees the ugliness of the grown-up Airedale. There is no use trying to tell what Kingthorne's pup looked like, because if adequate words could be found nobody would believe the description anyhow

Kingthorne spoke into the immense silence almost defiantly. "He's a bench dog," he said. "All my life I've wanted an Airedale—and I am sure Jimmy will be crazy about this one. So will you when you get used to his looks and appreciate his noble nature. That brown, woolly thing hasn't any class, my dear."

"Well. I like him!" cried Mrs. Kingthorne, indignantly

Jimmy slammed into the house just then. Something slammed in with him. It was an overgrown, calflike creature, all legs and tail and tongue, with a great ugly head, and its style of architecture was a combination of everything from early Greek down

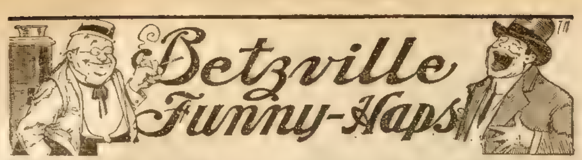
"He's mine!" Jimmy cried, proudly "An ashcart man gave him to me, an' he's goin' to sleep in my room an' everythin'! An' you said I could have a dog!" He gave a passing glance of disinterested scorn at the blooded Airedale and the toy woolly pup.

"I suppose," said Kingthorne, with a resigned sigh to his wife, "that we can chloroform our dogs!"

* * *

The Lesser Evil.

It's hard to live within one's salary, but there's one consolation—it's harder to live without it.



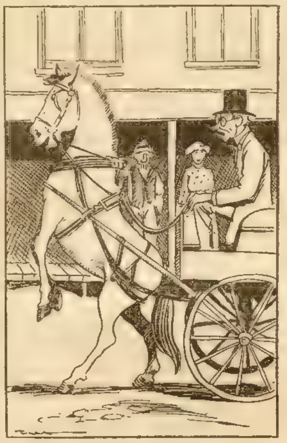
Rev. Spillgath and Moses

By Ellis Parker Butler

[Copyright by W. G. Chapman.]

Rev. Ebenezer Spillgath of Betzville is in serious trouble with his congregation at present, and it all goes to show that one should not be too forward in the good work of smiting the wicked. It is all right to smite the wicked, for that is all the wicked are good for, but any one desiring to smite should be careful not to pick out a wicked that will smite back.

When Purdon's Three-Ring Circus and Unmentionably Great Menagerie was in town about a month ago, it happened to be here on Thursday, and Rev. Ebenezer was greatly angered to find that when he opened prayer-meeting that night he had the meeting entirely to himself, and he decided that as the Egyptians—so to speak—had spoiled his meeting, he would wreak vengeance on them and spoil the Egyptians. As the circus had moved on to Billingsville that night, Rev. Ebenezer harnessed up his mare Rebecca, and drove over, and on the way over he made up his mind how he would spoil the Egyptians. Rev. Mr. Spillgath is noted in this county as one of the most progressive and slick horse traders on earth, and he decided he would spoil the Egyptians in a horse trade. He was not aware, at that time, he says, that the Egyptians were just spoiling to be spoiled.



It was as good as a circus.

When Rev. Ebenezer returned to Betzville Friday evening he no longer drove Rebecca, but a white horse, and he wore a smile that informed one and all that he felt he had successfully spoiled the Egptians and that he had spoiled them good and hard. Many were the congratulations he received from Uncle Ashdod Clute and other prominent citizens of Betzville, and he announced that it was his intention to call the horse, hitherto bearing the sinful name of Skeezicks, by the more appropriate name of Moses.

The next morning Rev. Ebenezer harnessed Moses and started on one of his accustomed tours of mercy and business, since his salary compels him to peddle watermelons between his stops at the homes of the sick and soul-sad, and all went well until he reached Main street. Here he paused and entered into a controversy with Alderman Bud Winters, on the merits of free liquor as against the mulct tax, when, suddenly, Moses arose upon his hind legs, and stood gracefully balanced thus. It was a thrilling scene—Alderman Winters scooting elsewhere; Rev. Ebenezer exiting from his buggy head first, and Moses standing on his hind legs. All this, set against the background of the Bankrupt Store and the postoffice made one of the pictures that will go down in the history of Betzville forever.

As soon as Rev. Ebenezer regained his composure he examined Moses, and a very superficial examination proved that Moses was still standing on his rear legs. Nothing that Rev. Ebenezer could do would bring the horse to any other posture. The horse seemed to want to stand that way, and so it stood that way. If Rev. Ebenezer ever became angry he came near it then, but a whip seemed to do not a bit of good, and when, with his patience quite exhausted, Rev. Ebenezer entered his buggy and whipped up, Moses went his way on his hind legs Many said it was as good as a circus.

That night Moses slept in his stall on his hind legs, while Rev. Ebenezer lay awake wondering what had caused the beast to act in this strange way. By daylight he decided that some word said in the presence of the horse must have been signal for the act, and he proceeded to the barn and repeated to the horse, as nearly as possible, what he had said to Alderman Bud Winters. Nothing worth chronicling happened, and with a sad heart Rev. Ebenezer harnessed the upright horse and went his way.

At the corner of Main and Cross streets he met a large body of citizens, all much interested, among whom was Alderman Bud Winters, and resuming the discussion of the day before, Alderman Winters expressed himself in his usual free and profane way. In the midst of the discussion Moses suddenly up-ended himself, with his rear legs in the air, and stood on his front hoofs. In vain did Rev. Ebenezer speak to the brute; he was compelled at last to continue his rounds with Moses walking on his fore feet. That night, and six nights thereafter, Moses slept in his stall with his rear hoofs against the rafts, and whenever Rev. Ebenezer went for a drive he was followed by a horde of interested parties. It was very annoying

Nothing that Rev. Ebenezer could do seemed to have any effect on Moses and the sight of the minister of the Gospel driving a horse that was a permanent circus caused considerable scandal in these parts. Aunt Rhinocolura Betz, who is one of the contributors in the congregation, gave notice that she was going to withdraw, and other leading society folks followed her example.

It was then that Rev. Ebenezer, driven to desperation, sent for Alderman Bud Winters. He had tried everything in his own vocabulary unavailingly, but the moment Alderman Winters opened his luxurious store of cuss words the effect on Moses was instantaneous. For each variety of oath Moses performed a different act, and the only difficulty seemed to be that Alderman Winters did not have in stock the particular kind of swear that would make Moses act like a regular horse. The nearest he came to it was when he said, "Blankety, blankety, your blank hide!" At this Moses did a cake walk on four legs, and Rev. Ebenezer had to be satisfied with that. It was better than having a horse walk on its hands. But Rev. Ebenezer is a man of bulldog tenacity, and he is having Bud Winters come up to the barn every night and swear at Moses. He hopes some day Alderman Winters will swear Moses into a regulation horse.

The trouble is that the congregation knows it, and they are trying to decide whether they shall discharge Rev. Ebenezer for having profane language fired off by order in his barn, or discharge him for having a horse that does the cake walk.

Next week, "Uncle Ashdod and the Bisquito." Read it. It is a scream.

* * *

Her Intuition.

"Dear me!" she sighed, "only ten months more of leap year."

"Yes," he replied, "but why are you worried about it?"

"I'm not worried—not in the least. Why did you think I was worried?"

"I thought you said it as if you were worried."

"I can't understand why you didn't run away if you thought that."

"Why should I run away?"

"Because of your fear that I might, being frightened at the shortness of the time remaining, propose to you at once if you did not hasten to escape."

"I had no idea that you ever thought of proposing to me."

"No more than you supposed I had ever thought of your proposing to me—is that it?"

"Well, perhaps that wouldn't be just the way to put it. Haven't you ever thought I might propose to you some time?"

"Are you serious?"

"Serious? I don't believe I quite——"

"Oh, Billy! I'm so happy. Do you know, something seemed to tell me you were going to propose to me this evening if I gave you half a chance. But don't ask me to set the wedding day too soon. Mamma and papa could never bear to lose me without plenty of time to get used to the idea. And I just couldn't be ready before a week from next Thursday at the earliest."

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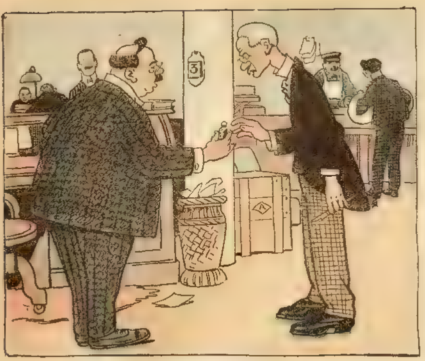


Bookkeeper—I have worked almost twenty-five years in your business. I have grown old and gray in it, and a little increase in salary

The Chief—All right, my boy I can't give you a raise, but here—here is some bully hair dye!

Too Strict.

"I'm afraid I shall have to let that new maid go

"What's the trouble?"

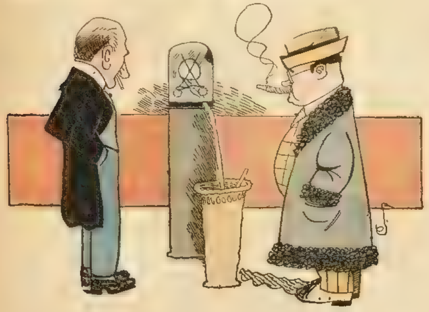
"She objects to my going out more than two afternoons a week."

Worse Than Tramps.

Wife—I was scared half to death today A tramp came along the street, and I thought he was coming in here

Husband—I left my pistol upstairs.

Wife—Yes but you forgot to unload it



The Wise Guy—Speculating in stocks is nothing but 'fisherman's luck'

The Shorn Lamb—Hardly that I've sometimes gone fishing and succeeded in saving my bait.

Almost Equine.

"James writes in that he now owns a self-starting automobile, Ezra," said the kind old lady to her husband.

"Humph!" replied Ezra. "They're gittin' them things down so fine that they'll be taking fright an' running away the fust thing we know!'

The Force of Analogy.

The Indignant Customer (who has ordered chicken and ham pie)—Look here, waiter, what's the matter with this pie? There's no chicken in it!

The Waiter—Well, sir, you wouldn't expect to find a dog in a dog biscuit, would you?

Woeful Ignorange.

Farmer—See, here, you! You remember putting two lightnin' rods on my barn last spring, don't you? Well that barn was struck, six weeks after, and burned down

Peddler—Struck by lightning?

"It was."

"In the daytime?"

"No, at night."

"Must a' been a dark night wasn't it?"

"Yes, the darkest."

"Lanterns burning?"

"What Lanterns?"

"Didn't you run lanterns up 'em on dark nights"

"Never heard o' anything like that"

"Well, if you don't know enough to keep your lightning rods lighted, you needn't blame me. Glang!"

❧

A Peaceful Country.

One afternoon during an adjournment for the holidays a number of prominent Senators and Representatives visited Monticello the home of Thomas Jefferson

A venerable negro acted as guide for the party, and the distinguished callers were much interested in his quaint disquisition upon the place and its memories. To this old fellow one of the Western Representatives chanced to put the question whether any battles had been fought in the vicinity of Monticello

"No, sah," promptly replied the aged darky, "no, sah, not sence de wah, sah

❧

Merely a Suggestion.

The second-hand dealer looked the car over carefully, and then made his offer

"I'll take the machinery of this motor," he said "but I don't want the rest of it'

"But" said Wiggins, "what'll I do with my body?"

"Your body" said the dealer. "Why, I don't know You'd ought to consult an undertaker about that."

❧

It Might Be.

"Your legal department must be very expensive

"Yes" sighed the eminent trust magnate, "it is"

"Still I suppose you have to maintain it"

Well, I don't know. Sometimes I think it would be cheaper to obey the law

❧

A Suburban Clock.

Caller—Land sakes! How late it is

Mrs. Suburb—Oh, you mustn't go by that clock It's two hours fast

Caller—Why don't you set it right?

Mrs. Suburb—Horrors, no! Don't touch it. That's the clock my husband catches trains by

❧

No Need of Alarm.

Mistress—It appears to me that you are entertaining a good many male callers in the kitchen.

New Girl—Yes'm; but yeh needn't be scared, mum I ain't goin' to marry any of 'em

❧

The Ups and Downs.

Old Gentleman—How am I to know that you are not marrying my daughter for my money?

Suitor—And how am I to know that you won't fail inside of a year?

❧

A Good Record for Both.

"I've driven my car for over a year now," said Bilkins "and I've never run down anybody"

❧

Misunderstood.

"Does she come of an old family?

"I don't think so. Her mother admits to being only 35.'

CH ER

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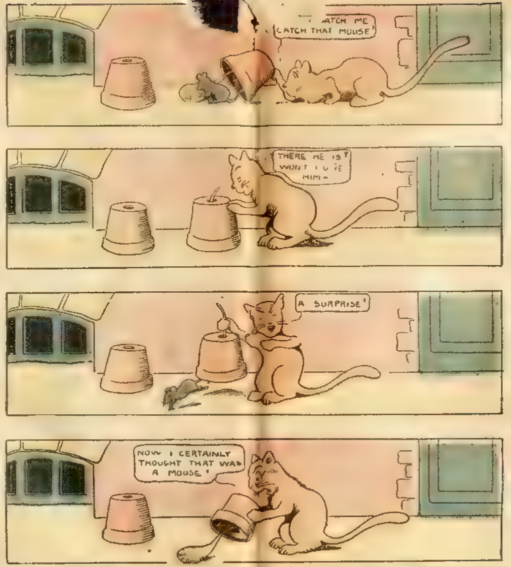
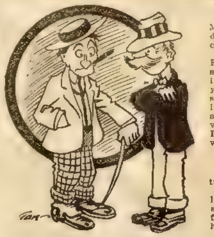

CATCH ME
CATCH THAT MOUSE
THERE HE IS! WON'T I GIVE HIM—
A SURPRISE!
NOW I CERTAINLY THOUGHT THAT WAS A MOUSE!



'Decided where you'll spend this summer?'

"No, I'm going to let my wife decide this year. She used to wake me up in the middle of the night last summer to remind me that I picked the place out."

His Reasons.

Minister—Mackintosh, why don't you come church now"

Mackintosh—For three reasons, sir! Firstly, I dinna like yer theology, secondly, I dinna like yer singin', and thirdly, it was in your kirk I first met my wife.

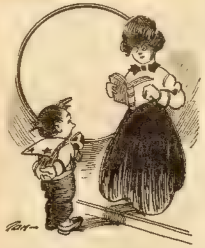
❧

Satisfied.

"Had a puncture, my friend?"

The chauffeur looked up and swallowed his feelings with a huge gulp.

"No, sir," he replied, "I'm just changing the air in the tires. The other lot's worn out, you know!"



Teacher—Why do we know the earth is round?

Pessimist's Little Boy—Because pa says nothin' is on the square any more.

A Bit of English Humor.

The night train was approaching Blackheath, outside of London, and two Americans, unacquainted with the locality were in doubt as to the station. One peered out through the window into the [illegible] darkness and sank back to his place. The other did precisely the [illegible]

"Is it Blackheath?" inquired the first

"The darkest I ever knew," repeated the [illegible] expressionless face [illegible]

A small, apologetic, shrinking sort of Englishman sitting next, spoke up

"I beg your pardon" he said, softly, "for intruding upon your personal and private conversation, but as I happen to share that knowledge with the Almighty, permit me to say that it is Blackheath"

■

The Prevalent Idea.

Herbert E March, the charity expert of Jacksonville, was talking about charity

"The rich give far more in charity," he said "than is generally believed. It's altogether erroneous, the prevalent idea of the rich man's callous, stupid attitude in the face of poverty and suffering

"That prevalent idea is illustrated well in the story of Mrs. Gobsa Golde, to whom a charity worker said, 'Thousands of poor people freeze to death every winter

"'Dear me!' Mrs. Gobsa Golde replied, 'Why don't they go to California?'"

■

Those Cold Storage Egge.

Bill—Had a funny thing happen up to our house this morning

Jill—What was it?

"Why, my wife put some eggs in the fireless cooker, so we could have 'em for breakfast, and the eggs must have taken the thing for an incubator, for we got young chickens out of the eggs"

❧

Prefers Home.

"How is it that Rufus never takes you to the theater any more?

"Well, you see, one evening it rained, and so we sat in the parlor."

"Yes."

Well, ever since that we—oh, I don't know but don't you think that theaters are an awful bore?"

❧

Breaking a Will.

"So you were successful in your efforts to break your uncle's will in which he left you only $20,000?"

"Yes I won out easily"

"And how much did you finally get."

"After paying the lawyers I took down $3,500

❧

Progress.

"Women are now making great strides," remarked Mrs. Baring-Banners.

"Yes," replied the husband; "only you can't notice it when you see one of 'em in a hobble skirt going after a street car."

❧

Poor Married Man.

"The time will come," thundered the suffragette orator, "when women will get a man's wages!"

"Yes," sadly muttered a man on the rear seat; "next Saturday night."—Judge.

❧

Heard on a Street Car.

"Has our friend the motorman decided on a name for his baby girl yet?"

"Yes, and it's a very appropriate one."

"What is it?"

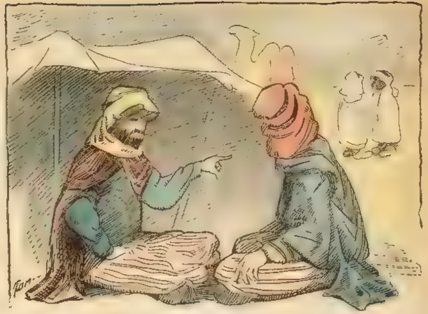
"Car'line!"

❧

The Essential Thing.

"Do you think a husband has a right to open his wife's letters?"

"He has the right, perhaps, but hardly ever the courage"



Harom Al Raschid—What kind of a language are those fellows speaking? I can't make out a word they say.

The Grand Vizier—Oh, commander of the faithful! Those two old ginks have lost all their teeth and are speaking gum arabic

Made A Bad Break.

Impecunious Suitor (endeavoring to make himself agreeable to Miss Angela's papa)—What a charming place you have here, Mr Oldman! Does it go all the way to that grove over there?

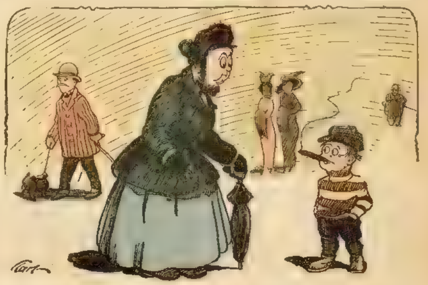
Unsympathetic Papa—It does

I. S.—And all the way to that stone wall in the distance on this side?

U. P.—It does! And it goes all the way to the creek on the south, and all the way to the State road on the north, but, Mr. Young Man, it does not go with my daughter Angela!

Without Argument.

It is said that one of David B. Hill's first lawsuits was a nonjury case in which the opposing counsel was one of the best attorneys in New York State Hill gave a speech which lasted about three hours. It was such a speech as might be expected from a young lawyer, and it was very trying on the Court After he had finished, his opponent arose and said: "May it please the Court, I intend to follow the example of my young friend, and submit the case without argument." Hill lost the case



"You young wretch! Smoking at your age, before you've learned to read or even to count as high as ten!"

"H'm! count ten! Seven, eight, nine, ten! There!"

"Why do you begin at seven?"

"Oh, we always throw out the small cards!"

Finesse.

First Digger—We'll need another piece of pipe to finish this drain

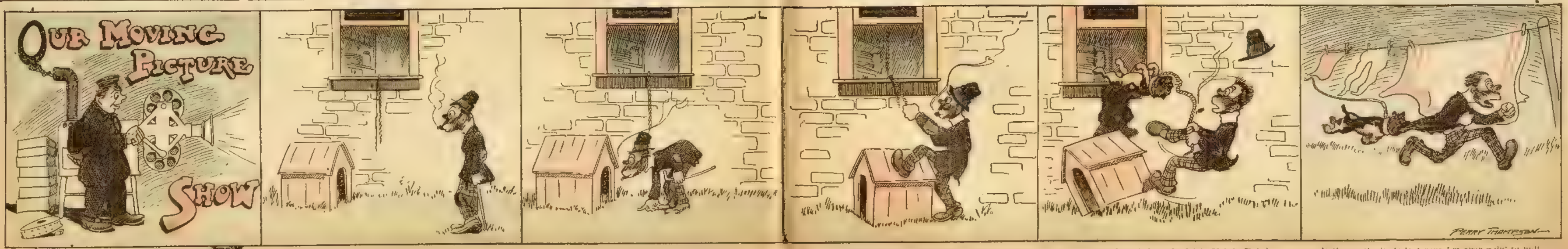
Second Digger—Don't say anything about it till tomorrow morning, and then we kin sit around till it gets here

A Flurry.

Mr. Gotham (looking over the market reports)—The paper says there was quite a flurry in beef yesterday

Mrs. Gotham—Gracious me! Did some more steers break loose?

ALL A CON GAME.



Hungry Hank—Wonder if dares anything in dat dog-house?

Nope; all de canine occupants is out'

Dis rope is sure handy to help ease me up to dem swell eats'

Deres a dog at de end of it! Help' Help!

Dat's positively de last rope I'm ever goin' to pull

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Excitement for Two.

FROM her upstairs sitting room window Mrs. Winklespoon gazed down into her neighbor's back yard with her needle in the air.

"My goodness!" she remarked. "I should think Mrs. Tilletts would simply ruin her Oriental rugs! Still, maybe it's all right!"

"I guess she got 'em at a bargain sale," commented Mrs. Speecher, peering out shrewdly. "They look it. I do believe if that woman ran across a bargain sale of coffins she'd outfit the family. Well, I must be going!"

Out on the street Mrs. Speecher remembered that she wanted a cake recipe from Mrs. Tilletts, so she turned in at the gate.

"I know you're cleaning house," she apologized, "but I thought you wouldn't mind me! Oh, your girl is just bringing in the rugs! How nice they look! Ha! Ha! Excuse me, but I just thought of something funny!"

"What was it?" demanded Mrs. Tilletts, sitting down on a stepladder and shaking out a dustcloth.

"Oh, it wasn't much," said Mrs. Speecher. "Only it made me laugh. I was over next door this afternoon, at Mrs. Winklespoon's, and she looked down into your back yard and said it was too bad you didn't know enough to know you couldn't beat Oriental rugs and that you were simply spoiling them!"

Mrs. Tilletts dropped the dustcloth and gave her hair an angry pat. She surveyed her caller with indignant eyes. "Did she say that?" she demanded in the repressed tone that stage heroines employ when making known the fact that there are immense areas of bottled emotion within them. "Well, if I don't know as much about Oriental rugs in two minutes as Gertrude Winklespoon does in two months I—I'll cut 'em up into scraps and make rag carpets of 'em! The idea! I'd thank her to stop prying into my affairs! I guess if we haven't a touring car that is mortgaged like some people's, we aren't precisely benighted heathen! Oriental rugs, indeed! Why, I was brought up on Oriental rugs!"

"DID SHE SAY THAT?"

"Now, you musn't let it worry you," said Mrs. Speecher, soothingly. "I wouldn't pay a bit of attention to anything she said!"

"Well, I guess not!" said Mrs. Tilletts emphatically.

The day after that Mrs. Speecher dropped into Mrs. Winklespoon's again. "You really don't know how to take some women," she mourned. "I always thought Mrs. Tilletts such a nice, sensible person and yet when I happen to tell her in the kindest possible way that we had seen her beating her rugs and was afraid she would spoil them she actually lost her temper! You ought to have heard the things she said? You couldn't bribe me to repeat them!"

"You tell me this minute!" commanded Mrs. Winklespoon, excitedly. "What on earth was there for her to get mad about?"

"Not a single solitary thing!" aggrievedly asserted Mrs. Speecher. "She said you couldn't tell an Oriental from a homemade rag carpet and that every one was talking about your automobile being mortgaged."

Mrs. Winklespoon sat down and breathed hard. "I'd never have thought she had such a tongue! Just let her say again our car is mortgaged and I'll sue her! The idea! She is green with jealousy because they haven't one, and goodness knows I've taken her out in ours often enough! This is my thanks! And wasn't I on the committee to buy rugs for the parsonage and doesn't that prove that my judgment is considered good? I don't want anything more to do with her!"

"I'LL SUE HER."

"I'm glad you have some spirit," commended Mrs. Speecher. "I wouldn't stand it either!"

On her way down the street Mrs. Speecher met Mrs. Tilletts. "It's just a shame," she said, "that Mrs. Winklespoon is so touchy! I just happened to say that I was in your house and she burst right out and said you were so envious of her car it made her sick and she'd never take you riding again after hearing somewhere that you'd said her car was mortgaged! She even threatened to sue you!"

"Sue me!" echoed Mrs. Tilletts, clutching the fence. "Why—why that's scandalous. I'll tell my husband! I guess nobody is going to attack me this way for no cause! If there's any suing done, I think I'm the injured person!"

"Mrs. Tilletts is going to sue you!" gasped Mrs. Speecher, bursting into Mrs Winklespoon's house ten minutes later. "You'd better do something quick! I thought I'd give you warning!"

Fifteen minutes later Tilletts and Winklespoon, each summoned by a hysterical telephone message, rushed to their stricken homes. Half an hour later over the back fence they concluded their arbitration meeting and turned their backs to their houses to conceal their ribald grins.

"Come over to the corner and have a cigar," said Winklespoon. "Then, after wiping Mrs. Speecher off the map I guess there's nothing more for this session to do, is there?"

"Search me," agreed Tilletts. "Say, what was the row all about, anyhow?"

"Blamed if I know!" said Winklespoon, cheerfully. "But think what a good time they'll have now making up!"

⁂

One Way to Borrow.

A stranger blew into town in New Mexico, and, when he recovered consciousness, found himself in a poker game, where he gazed into the militant face of the dealer.

"In this town," the dealer was saying, "all flushes are barred. We don't play a flush."

"Is that the rule all over town?" queried the stranger.

"It is," said the dealer.

The game progressed without special incident until seven o'clock in the morning, at which time the stranger found himself holding four aces. It developed later that one of his opponents had gathered together four kings. They bet all the money, all the jewelry and all the clothing they had.

"This hand of mine," the stranger finally said, "looks good to me. Will you fellows give me two hours to raise more money?"

They said they would.

The stranger went to the only bank in the town, and roosted on the steps until the president went in. The president had sat in the game for a short while the night before.

"I want to borrow $20,000," the stranger explained to the bank president.

"What collateral have you?" asked the money man.

For reply the stranger showed him the four aces, which he had concealed in his breast pocket. The president's comment was equally brief. He handed the stranger the $20,000.

This story sounds like a dream, too good to be true, but a politician from the Southwest told it—and politicians never lie.

⁂

Table Etiquette.

"You may say what you please about the wild and wooly Southwest," said a traveling man, "but I know some of the people there have ideas about the usages in society. I was at a hotel table in Texas not long ago where most of the guests were of the rough, drinking type. An old fellow and his son were sitting together, and all at once somebody called the son a liar. Son didn't shoot—he just grabbed his table knife and started for his detractor. Well, sir, in less than a minute his father grabbed him by the collar and forced him back into his chair.

"'Ain't you got no manners?' he hissed into the ear of the angry youth. 'What have I taught ye?'

"'He called me a liar!' howled the boy, brandishing his weapon.

"'S'pos'n' he did, sonny?' went on the father. 'Ain't you got no table manners? Put down that there knife an' use yer fork'"

"They know how to teach children etiquette in the Southwest, and don't you forget it!"

⁂

The Pastor's Mistake.

Pastor—What did I say in my sermon yesterday that you objected to?

Mr. De Good—You surprise me, my dear sir. I did not object to anything.

Pastor—But I heard you give a very audible snort at something I said.

Mr. De Good—Oh, no; no, indeed. That was only a snore.

A Trick That Failed.

To make an egg stand on end without breaking the shell, place a small looking-glass level on the table, face upward. Take a fresh egg, shake it violently, so that the white and yolk mix; then place it upon the point, and it will stand in equilibrium."

This was a newspaper paragraph young Wickwire read in an evening paper, and, as he was fond of parlor magic, he carefully cut out the paragraph for future reference.

A few days after that he was invited to a little private party at a friend's, and, as Wickwire was always called upon to help entertain wherever he might happen to be, he brushed up a few of his old chestnuts for use on this occasion.

A happy thought struck him as he ran across the newspaper cutting the afternoon before. He read it over carefully, so as to take in all the details of the trick, which he was quite sure he had pretty well fastened in his memory. As it seemed so simple, he didn't bother to test it.

During the evening Mr. Wickwire was called upon to give a little exhibition of his parlor magic. After a suitable amount of hesitancy, he did his knife-swallowing trick, and his second-sight trick, and his empty-hat trick; and then he announced he had an entirely new and novel trick that he was about to produce for the first time. At this every one applauded, for they were all heartily tired of the old tricks.

"Will you please get me an egg and a small mirror?" asked Mr. Wickwire of the hostess.

"Certainly," was the reply.

When the hostess asked the cook for an egg, she found there was not one in the house, so the girl was sent over to a neighbor's for one.

When the egg arrived, Wickwire held it up where all could see it, made a few mysterious passes, uttered some incomprehensible words, and began shaking it. After he thought he had it shaken up enough, he stood it on its point on the mirror; but for some mysterious reason the egg toppled over.

Then the audience smiled, and some one was rude enough to ask if that was his new trick, and if he had thought it all out himself. That made Wickwire a little hot. He said some one must have been shaking the table. Nevertheless, he thought best to take up the egg and shake it again.

After a while he tried balancing it again, and again the egg fell over as though it were tired.

"If you want to stand it up, why don't you break the shell?" asked some one.

But Wickwire said nothing. He was busy enough trying to balance that egg and keeping from getting hot. He ran over the newspaper cutting again in his mind, to be sure he was right. Then he tried it again, and again the egg rolled over like a tired tramp.

Wickwire had about concluded that this egg must be an abnormal monstrosity of some kind, but out of sheer desperation he grabbed it for another shake.

"He has to shake it three times for luck," whispered a spectator audibly, and Wickwire, in the agony of despair, gave a more desperate shake than ever.

The final shake settled it.

The secret was out—and so was the overdone egg juice. The shaking up had generated enough gas, aided by Wickwire's hands, to burst the shell to smithereens.

The fluid ran down over Mr. Wickwire's person and over his shirt front. It also made its presence felt in another way—that made all the visitors weary, and want to go home without stopping to take any regreshments.

The majority of them did start out into the gloaming to revel in the fresh air of the front garden, but they did not get out quick enough to see the neighbor's small boy climbing over the fence from his hiding-place under the window. The small boy had merely loaned the servant girl the only real ripe egg in the house, and had followed along after to see the fun.

He saw it.

⁂

The Station Agent's Job.

"Do you suppose No. 17 will be in on time day after tomorrow? Why not?"

"Can you tell me if a young lady in a blue dress and straw hat got off the train which got in from the North at 2 10?"

"What time does the 5 o'clock train leave, and is it going to leave on time?"

"Is the train going to get into Fort Wayne on time, do you think?"

"What made No. 7 so late a week ago last Tuesday?"

"Do you think it is safer to ride in a parlor car, or is there apt to be a rear-end collision?"

"Why is No 13 marked up for fifteen minutes late?"

"Have you noticed an old gentleman with white whiskers and a telescope go through the gate any time today?"

"How do I get to Binks Corner, Tex., without changing cars?"

"I lost a backcomb on the south-bound train three weeks ago last Wednesday. Can you tell me where I can find it?"

"Will you watch for my sister and tell her how to get up to my house? I haven't time to wait for her train."

Snaring Maiden Feet.

(Continued from page ten.)

"Yes?" came a voice directly. "The Star."

"Shoreham Memorial Hospital," explained Corwin. "You were to receive word when the patient in J regained consciousness."

"Yes, of course," came an eager voice. "How is he?"

"Weak, but conscious."

"Mind clear?"

"So the nurse reports."

"All right. There'll be some one right up."

The Star office rang off, and the interne went back to J. The nurse was there, preparing another stimulating drink.

"I was told to give a tonic," she said.

"All right," replied the interne. "What is it you are giving him?"

"Brandy sling."

"Then cut it out," the Doctor said. "You'll have him raving."

"Orders!" said the nurse.

"Go back to your desk," the interne said, taking the glass from her hand. "I'll stay here. There's some one coming to see him. But first get the chief on the 'phone if you can. I have a notion that they will want to move J tonight, and it ought not to be done."

The nurse went out and shut the door with a slam, angry at not being taken into full confidence in the matter of the patient in J. He had been there more than a week, and every day there had been men she did not know, men who had, it seemed to her, no business in the hospital, looking him over and listening to his ravings.

If they took him away that night, that would be the end of the case, so far as she was concerned. Resolved to satisfy her curiosity, whatever happened, she opened the door to a vacant room next to that occupied by the patient, saw that a private opening—doubtless made by some former nurse with a curiosity as great and as unscrupulous as that of the present one—was still practicable, and returned to her desk. Then she called the chief's number, but received no response.

It was plain that she intended hearing what took place in that room. In a few moments she heard the door below open, and then, after a few challenging words from an orderly, two pairs of shoes were heard on the staircase.

In the men who stood before her, the next moment, Margaret recognized two of the frequent visitors to the patient in J. One of them, the stout, florid one, she had often remarked, looked like a policeman in citizen's clothes. The other was an older man, with keen eyes and a pale, scholarly face.

"Where is Corwin," the stout man asked, after the style of one accustomed to demand what he wanted without parley of words.

Margaret pointed to the door of J, and the two moved forward. But the nurse was nettled by the manner and tone of the man who had spoken, and so she exercised her nurse's authority.

"Keep away from that door," she said, reprovingly. "I'll see if he wants to talk with you."

The pale man flushed at the rebuff, but the face of the other grew redder than before and his eyes snapped viciously. However, they both halted in front of the door and waited for the nurse to communicate with the interne.

"You may go in," Margaret said, in a moment, turning back

"You are mighty kind!" the stout person said, angrily.

The two found the interne standing by the side of the bed, his hand on the sick man's pulse. Malcolm Holme appeared to be weak, but he was undoubtedly in his right mind. There was a bandage about his head, and a bruise showed on his cheek. Other marks of the assault were still in evidence.

"Getting on, eh?" the stout man said, with a grin intended to be conciliatory.

Holme nodded weakly.

"This," said the interne, "is Captain Preston, of the Shannon police station."

Holme nodded again.

"What I want to see you about," the police captain said, "is about the attack on you—if it was an attack."

"I was struck on the head from behind," Holme stated

"Sure you didn't fall on the icy payement?" asked Preston

"I was struck on the head from behind," repeated the sick man

"Would you be able to identify your assailant?" asked the other visitor.

"No; I did not see him," was the reply.

The interne thought he saw a swift glance of satisfaction pass between the two men.

"There has been an arrest," Preston went on, "and we thought maybe you might be able to identify the fellow."

Holme shook his head

"No," he said. "I did not see him."

The other motioned to Preston, and the police captain said:

"This is a man from the Star, and, if you are strong enough, he would like to ask you a few questions."

"Make them as brief as possible," the interne said. "He is still weak, and may fail at any moment."

"Very well," Bennett said, "I'll be as brief as possible. Mr. Holme," he went on, "do you know that a man admitting himself to be Sir Jasper Holme has surrendered himself to the police at New Orleans?"

A look of astonishment, of incredulity, came to the white face of the sick man. His eyes flashed excitedly.

"I had not heard of that," he said. "Nearly every trick imaginable has been played against me, however, so it may be as you say."

"There is no doubt that a man claiming to be Sir Jasper Holme has surrendered himself at New Orleans," the police captain cut in.

"And he bears every resemblance to the man who escaped from prison," Bennett went on. "Another officer from the prison where he served so long has been sent down there for the purpose of identifying him. Suppose his report agrees with the confession of the man—what then?"

"It is a fraud," was the quiet reply. "My brother died in my arms on the coast of Maine, after executing the will which has been offered for probate."

"But, still, this will complicate matters," said Bennett. "If the officer sent from the prison identifies this man, your claim falls to the ground"

Holme sighed wearily and closed his eyes

"Have you heard from Ruth?" he asked, evidently considering the other matter as closed for the time being. "If you are a police officer, you ought to know about her."

"She has not been found," Preston said, shortly.

"Now, in view of the possible elongation of this litigation," Bennett said, "would it not be well for you to consent to compromise?"

"You speak for the defendants, then?" Holme asked, his eyes lighting with the new aspect given to the interview. "If the man who surrendered himself at New Orleans believed by the defendants to be the real Jasper Holme, they would be the last ones to suggest compromise with me. He is the man they would seek to come to terms with."

Bennett flushed slightly and turned away. Captain Preston turned to the interne

"This man," he said, "is under arrest for perjury and forgery. Is he able to be moved? If not, I must send an officer here to guard the door."

"He must not be moved," was the reply. "And you must present an order from the chief before an officer will be permitted to come here."

"We'll see about that, my fine fellow," said the captain, angrily. "We'll see about that!"

When the police captain and the managing editor passed down the corridor the chair at the night nurse's desk was vacant, and when they came to the telephone booth they heard the low whisper of a woman's voice talking into the transmitter. When the door closed behind them, Margaret came out of the booth and met the interne at the desk.

"Did you reach the parties?" the interne asked.

"Yes," was the reply, "and there's going to be something doing here before many hours. You stick around," she added, with a smile at the involuntary use of slang, "and you'll see something worth while."

"You heard what was said interne, pointing to the door of J.

"Certainly! Didn't you know what I would do if you shut me out?"

"Yes, I know," grinned the other.

"Well, I heard from them about the convict in New Orleans," the nurse went on, "and I also heard from the 'phone about the convict in New Orleans," she added, laughingly. "He is to be brought to the State prison today—that is, if it is almost morning now."

"You refer to the convict who claims to be Sir Jasper Holme?" asked the interne.

"Why, yes, of course. The patient in J says he is a fraud."

"If he is," the doctor mused, "he is being pushed forward by the defendants in the Holme suits. Clever notion that, if what the patient claim is true. You see, it would be easy for the defendants to settle with such a person—with a creature put forward in fraud."

The drink administered to Holme had quieted him so that he was sound asleep when the nurse opened the door again. The interne sat down by the night desk and busied himself with the folded papers.

"You're sticking around," the nurse said, with a smile, "waiting for the big show."

"I know something about what is likely to happen myself," the interne replied.

He turned to Orderly Smith, who sat in an easy-chair farther down the corridor.

"Get plenty of warm blankets," he said. "We shall need them before long."

"For J?" asked the nurse, and the doctor nodded.

"He will be taken out," the interne said," before Captain Presten gets his policeman here to disgrace the hospital. Listen, and you will hear them coming now."

But only one man came up the stairs then, and when he reached the top the uniform of a policeman was disclosed. He stood waiting there, as if uncertain what course to pursue. Presently two more men came up, and one of them

(Continued on page seventeen.)

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In Old Slavery Days.

(Continued from page two.)

her golden hair like a halo about her head. She smiled, as her husband came up to the bed.

"My wife! my darling!" he murmured, brokenly, as he bent over and kissed her on the brow.

A look of pain stole into her eyes as she looked at his white, haggard face. She knew how greatly he had suffered during that night of fear and suspense; she knew also that greater suffering was coming to him.

"The child will comfort him in time," she thought. "You have a little daughter," she said aloud.

"Yes," he replied, "but I cannot rejoice over that yet. I can only remember that to bring the child into the world has nearly robbed me of you."

There was unspeakable pity in the lovely eyes as she looked up at him.

"I—I wish you did not love me quite so much, Ernest," she said, tremulously.

He smiled, wondering if she really knew how inexpressibly dear she was to him.

He passed from his wife's room into the one adjoining, where Aunt Sabina sat with the baby on her lap. She proudly put aside the wrappings in which the tiny form was swathed, disclosing a puckered red face.

"Ain't she a beauty, Marse Ernest?" she exclaimed. "I nebber seed a finer baby."

Ernest Compton laughed.

"All new-born babies look alike to me," he declared.

Aunt Sabina gave a grunt of indignation.

"I reckon you ain't no jedge ob babies, Marse Ernest," she said, as she replaced the wrappings. "You war a mighty fine baby yo'se'f, but you warn't nuffin lak as fine a baby as dis heah one, no, indeedy!"

Ernest Compton laughed again, as he turned to go out. He was feeling very, very happy, with no premonition of the sorrow overshadowing his life.

CHAPTER IV

THE OCTOROON'S REVENGE.

In the cabin in the slave quarters, Olata sat before the fire with a baby four days old on her lap. It was twilight, and the room was lighted only by the fire. The red light from the leaping flames shone upon the dark head and richly tinted face of the octoroon and upon the tiny form and red, wrinkled face of the child at her breast.

There was no tenderness in Olata's dark eyes, as she looked down at the child. The maternal instinct still lay dormant within her. She had not wanted the child; it had only brought her trouble. Because of it she had been sent back to the quarters, separated from her kind, gentle mistress, shut out from the sight of the handsome face, the sound of the voice she loved. The ordeal of motherhood has passed over her very lightly, and although the child was but a few days old, she was almost herself again.

"P'raps the mistis'll let me leave the baby with Granny Lize and go back to the big house," she was thinking, as she sat before the fire on New Year's evening.

At that moment Granny Lize, an old quadroon, the grandmother of Olata, came into the cabin.

"I reckon you done thought I war never comin' chile," she said, as she unwound the gray woolen shawl from about her head and shoulders, after placing a basket she carried on the table. "I war up at de big house. De mistis done sent you a bottle ob wine and some good things to eat, but she didn't say nuffin 'tall 'bout yo' comin' back to de big house."

The octoroon did not speak. She sat looking down at the child. Granny Lize came and stood beside her, looking down at the child.

"Dat chile gwine to look same as a white chile," she declared, with a chuckle. "Now, I gwine to git you yo' suppah." At the door leading into the other room of the cabin, she stopped and looked back. "Thar's a baby gal ober at Mist' Ernest Compton's, bo'n last night," she added. Olata started, awakening the baby, which began to cry. "Dey thought Mist' Ernest's wife gwine to die, but she done pull through," and she went on out.

Olata straightened up in her chair, her breath coming hurriedly. Then she looked down upon the child, whimpering upon her lap, with a strange look. She was thinking of Granny Lize's words, "Dat chile gwine to look same as a white chile."

She had thought of a way to be avenged upon the woman who had stolen her lover.

That night, at twelve o'clock, as Granny Lize lay in a heavy sleep induced by the wine from the "big house," which it did not require much urging from Olata to induce her to partake of freely, the octoroon stole from the cabin, carrying her baby in her arms.

Olata moved swiftly away from the quarters in the direction of the river, gliding moiselessly over the crisp snow The night was cold and clear, the deep blue of the cloudless sky studded with stars. Olata reached the river, crossed the bridge, glided up the terraced hill of Compton Manor, and made her way to a door in the rear of the house. She found this door unlocked. The Southern people, at that time, gave little thought to locking their doors, even at night.

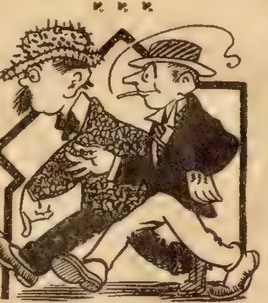
Olata entered the house. She had frequently been sent to Compton Manor by her mistress, and she was perfectly familiar with the interior of the house. In her swift, noiseless way she passed up the stairway and paused at a door on the landing above. There she stood listening All was silent within.

Olata opened the door and entered, stopped and looked about her. In a dainty crib of carved white wood, draped with curtains of pink silk, lay the child born that day. Aunt Sabina sat before the fire in a rocking chair sleeping soundly.

Olata glided up to the crib, concealing herself in such a manner behind the curtains that Aunt Sabina could not see her if she should happen to awaken. With deft, quick fingers, handling the babies so as not to awaken them, Olata changed their clothing. Then she placed her own baby, wearing the dainty apparel of the other, in the crib, and passed softly from the room, carrying in her arms the child of Lucille Compton.

The continuation of this remarkable story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year, and we have stories awaiting publication that you cannot afford to miss.

* * *



Harker—A man doesn't have to have much on his shoulders to get into trouble these days.

Barker—No; sometimes a little blonde hair will do the trick.

* * *

Musical Treat.

"So glad to see you," said Mrs. Dullard to Rev. A. Alexander Chopin-Fugue on the occasion of his first call at the Dullard home. "I am so glad that we have a minister who is especially fond of music, as I hear that you are. I have heard that you never miss a symphony concert when you are in Boston, and that you are a fine performer on the piano yourself. We have a great deal in common if you love music. All of my children are very fond of music, and I am so glad that they are home that they can play for you. This is our little Robert. He has never had but one term of lessons, but he can play almost anything he takes a notion to. Robert, sit down to the piano and play the 'Jolly Boy Waltz.' He can play it with hardly a mistake, so I want him to play it for you, and——"

"I really have time for——

"He can play it in four or five minutes, and then I want him and his sister Lutie to play their duet for you. It is something they made up themselves, although Lutie is only eleven. And I do not want you to go until you have heard our little Percy play 'A Life on the Ocean Wave.' He is only seven, so of course we have to allow for some mistankes——"

"I am sorry, but really I fear that——"

"Percy, run upstairs and tell your sister May to come down. I want her to play her little piece for the minister. She can play 'Bringing in the Sheaves" with two hands. I am sure that you will enjoy hearing my little ones. Now, Robert, let us have the "Jolly Boy Waltz," and I want you to play it the best you can."—Puck.

* * *

Many a true word is spoken by mistake.

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A Splendid Liar.

(Continued from page four.)

isn't she? A perfect beauty! What's the darling's name?"

"Birdie," stated Miss Joyace, without a pause. The expression on her fair, piquant face was that of a quiet pool; her clear eyes met the questioner's gaze without quiver of lash. "She's such a bright little thing I thought of Wren and Thrush and Robin, but combined them all in Birdie," explained this female Ananias.

"What a liar!" I thought, admiringly. "What a generous, incomparable, splendid liar!"

Throughout the meal, our passenger serenely prevaricated as necessity dictated. I, a helpless spectator, well knew that her motive was nothing more or less than divine compassion—pity for tongue-tied, wretched Joe.

"How could you do it?" I found opportunity to ask her, while my friend briefly tarried with a physician called in to dress his foot. She was adjusting her motor cap on wind-blown, escaping curls of Titian gold hair, and undisguisedly applying a powder puff—with the hall mirror as a guide—to cheeks already the hue of cream on rose-leaves.

"It's art," she told me, "highly cultivated art. "You see," she explained, winding her motor veil about the rebellious wisps of straying gold, "I accompanied Uncle during the entire campaign. He's obliged to adapt himself to all men. There was endless need of finesse. And today I thought—I imagined that poor Mr. Arkwright——"

I understood, although the words ended unintelligibly because of pins held between the pretty lips of this charming diplomat. Utterly lacking in self-consciousness or prudery, pure in mind as the winds of heaven, she had, without hesitation, intervened between Joe and his inquisitor.

I cranked up, and we were seated ready for the next fifty-mile lap, when misfortune ushered in the climax. It came in the person of the local sheriff and his posse. Portly and important, he squared himself in front of our purring motor, thus barring the way, while his armed assistants ranged at right and left like actors in a cheap drama.

"You're my prisoners," declared the sheriff, in throaty accent. His moonlike visage glowed from recent haste; his gingham shirt was open at the brawny throat, and his fat hand grasped a huge revolver.

"For what offense?" cried Joe.

"Kidnaping," he charged. "I was 'phoned to intercept you. You have in your possession the stolen Coddy child. Don't deny it."

We didn't. We were altogether too dumbfounded. Like a flash I recalled the suspicious farmer's wife and the rural 'phone. The Coddy child! Absurd! That millionaire kid, for whose recovery a fortune had been spent, was twice the age and double the size of the infant in the lap of our fair passenger. I glanced at Joe. His face was ashen and stern. He would have spoken, but I saw a small hand grip his sleeve.

"You're talking great nonsense, Buck Holben," declared Miss Joyace. "What is it you want?"

"I want them kidnapers landed in jail, and you with them as accomplice," stated the sheriff.

In that instant I realized the gravity of our position. Immediate bail was impossible. Explanation to the law required time. The sheriff's zeal was quickened by the enormous reward offered for recovering the kidnaped heir to the Coddy millions. In any case the ridiculous accident would be blazoned forth in every newspaper of the land. I mentally writhed, as I recalled my part in subjecting Miss Joyace to this ordeal. As with lightning's flash I reviewed the horror of our predicament. I became aware that Miss Joyace had removed hat and veil. The fluffy gold of her hair framed her saucy, piquant face. Her blue eyes flashed with anger, and her level gaze held the sheriff spellbound.

"Well, I'll be gosh-darned," he finally exploded, "if you ain't the girl with red hair what went about with Mart Joyace!"

"And you're a fool, Buck Holben," the girl informed him. "Would you arrest the niece of your new Congressman?"

The mystified sheriff stood a moment in meditative silence.

"Just the same," he stubbornly decided, "that hain't sayin' who's these men an' what's this kid, an' they don't budge till I find out."

The girl burst into laughter.

"It's too bad," she cried ironically, "that the niece of Congressman Joyace can't travel with her husband and child! It's a pity," she declared, derisively, "that our car and chauffeur must be held up while we explain! If you want to keep your job, Buck Holben," she menaced, "you'll step aside and let us pass."

"Our chauffeur!" The nerve! I was furious, yet my blood raced at the gameness of her ruse. She had thrown false modesty to the winds and bluffed the sheriff. Lady Ananias! The magnificent, quick-witted, modern Sapphira! For a moment the officer wavered, moved reluctantly a pace—and lost. With a whir of the still live motor, I shot by, and left the man of law pondering, mouth agape and half-convinced.

At Hampton, Joe seemingly took up winter quarters. When I complained at the delay, he remembered his foot, and talked about strained ligaments and healing liniments. At other times he used this supposedly crippled member in getting to and from our hotel to the residence of Congressman Joyace. When I further protested at enduring solitude, he reminded me that the orphan—which he had formally adopted—was temporarily domiciled under the protecting care of Miss Joyace. He declared they were studying on the details of her future welfare. At last my patience reached the finis.

"See here, Joe," I told him, "this auto trip's a failure; I'm going home."

"So'm I," he genially responded. "We'll all four start back immediately after the wedding."

He gazed at me radiantly; our hands met in a prolonged grip.

"It worked out just as I figured it would," was my comment.

"What in Heaven's name are you talking about?" demanded the mystified Joe.

"A problem of pity, a babe, and a tonneau," I explained.

The End.

* * *

Snaring Maiden Feet.

(Continued from page fifteen.)

stopped for an instant and spoke to the officer, then both advanced to the desk.

"What do you think of this?" the interne said. "The tall man is the chief of police, and the young one is Howard, the owner of the Star. They've come to carry the patient in J away, I take it. There's the gong of the ambulance now."

The interne arose as he spoke, and advanced to meet the newcomers. In a moment all three disappeared in J, and Orderly Smith followed with blankets, as the attendants from the ambulance came up the stairs with the carrying basket.

The great clock at the end of the corridor ticked solemnly for half an hour, during which time only faint sounds of conversation came from J. Then, after a few words with an orderly below, a young man bustled into the corridor and approached the nurse. Without speaking he tossed a card on her desk.

"O. Ketchum Quick!" exclaimed the latter, reading the card. "What a funny name!"

"Dramatist and reporter for the Star," the bustling young man said. "I'm here on the Holme case. What's new?"

"The owner of the Star and the chief of police are with him," replied the nurse.

"Who else has been here?" Quick asked.

"Captain Preston, of the Shannon street station, and your managing editor," answered the nurse. "I'd like to know what there is about this case that is attracting so much attention."

"It's a scream!" replied the reporter. "You'll see the Star turned upside down in a few days—the office and editorial rooms, I mean, and not the newspaper itself."

"Are you going in there?" asked the nurse, pointing to the door of J.

"I'm waiting for the boss" was the reply. "I'm here under orders. Here they come now!"

The door of J opened, and the attendants came out, carrying the swinging basket. The owner of the Star and the chief of police walked close behind the sick man.

"There!" cried the nurse, dropping back into her chair, "I hope to gracious we'll get a little rest now. That man in J has turned the hospital upside down ever since he has been here!"

The conclusion of this interesting story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year and we have stories awaiting publication that you cannot afford to miss

* * *

A Forgetful Man.

There is no doubt that the tying of a piece of string round the finger is really an aid to poor memory; but there is a well-authenticated case of a man who tied a piece of cord around his finger in the morning to remind him to get his hair cut.

On his way home to dinner that evening he noticed the piece of cord.

"Oh, yes, I remember," he said.

And, smiling proudly, he entered the accustomed shop and sat down before the tonsorial operator.

"Er-yes, sir?" said the artist, puzzled inquiry in his tones.

"Eh? Oh, yes; cut my hair, please," commanded the absent-minded one curtly.

"Why, certainly, sir, if you wish it," said the artist. "But you won't mind my mentioning the fact that I cut it this morning, will you?"

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Chicago Ledger

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The Ledger employs no traveling agents to solicit subscriptions, and every person working in that capacity is a fraud. No person is authorized to take subscriptions for the Ledger unless he or she be well known in the city or village where they have been appointed agents to sell this paper every week. A liberal reward will be paid for evidence that will enable us to arrest and convict such persons as are now traveling from town to town in different sections of this country, claiming to be agents of the Ledger and thereby defrauding the people. Beware of strangers.

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Advertising rate $2.25 per Agate Line, per insertion, for advertisements in The Chicago Ledger and The Saturday Blade combined. These two weeklies have an average circulation of

1,000,000

COPIES WEEKLY.

GENTLE JABS.

Age before beauty—the century plant.

Many are called, but few want to get up.

Flattery aimed at a sensible woman falls flat.

The lazier a man is the more fish he can catch.

A good bluff makes more noise than great riches.

Better single blessedness than double wretchedness.

Most women are as modest as the styles will permit.

There are two sides to an argument, but only one end.

A liberal-minded man is one who thinks the way you do.

Age may bring wisdom, but leaves little time to use it.

There are times when a silent witness is an unspeakable nuisance.

All men are born free and equal, but most women are slaves to fashion.

Every man on earth considers a promise sacred—if made to him by another.

From seven different angles there are always six fools among seven wise men.

A square deal is all a man wants, but he likes to be the judge of its squareness.

When counting his blessings a man generally refuses to include his poor relations.

If you would have others think well of you, set an example by thinking well of yourself.

Few of the things that come to the man who waits are the things he has been waiting for.

There is one thing in the small boy's favor—he never pretends to like anybody he doesn't like.

Some men never succeed in putting their best foot forward because they are unable to decide which one it is.

It might be well for wives to remember that if a man doesn't find any sympathy at home there are other places.

Many a spinster insists that she is true to the memory of her first love, who was in the good-die-young class.

The average man is more polite to people he never expects to meet again than to those whose good will is really worth cultivating.

ANECDOTES OF PEOPLE

Worth the Difference.

Mme. Pavlova, the beautiful Russian dancer, was the subject of discussion at a recent tea at the Colony Club, in New York.

"Pavlova can take care of herself," said an actress. "She took care of herself splendidly in an interview last year with a multimillionaire's wife.

"This rich woman called on Pavlova and asked her if she'd dance at a dinner at her house on Riverside drive. Pavlova said she would—for $1,500.

"'But isn't that rather high?' said the lady.

"'No, madame,' said Pavlova. 'I couldn't think of dancing for you for less.'

"'Come,' said the other, 'make it $1,200! Do!"

"'No,' said Pavlova firmly. 'No, my price is $1,500.'

"'Very well, then so be it."

"And the lady with a resigned air, rose and drew her sables about her; but at the door she turned and said:

"'Of course, you know, I shan't expect you to mingle with my guests.'

"'Oh, in that case,' said Pavlova, with a smile, 'I'll gladly knock off the $300.'"

The Fortunate Thing.

"There is such a thing as overdoing this 'bright side' business," recently observed a crusty old bachelor, "as was evidenced recently in the household of a friend of mine whose wife has always prided herself on the circumstance that she looks on the bright side.

"The husband, an absent minded sort of chap, put the lighted end of his cigar in his mouth as he sat reading one evening. Of course, he jumped and made a dreadful racket for a moment. Then wifey, anxious to live up to her reputation of being nice and cheerful and encouraging, smiled blandly and observed:

"At any rate, dear, it was most fortunate that you discovered it at once!"

Wonderful Tonic.

"John," said a wife who was supposed to be on her deathbed, "in case of my death I think a man of your temperament and domestic nature, aside from the good of the children, ought to marry again."

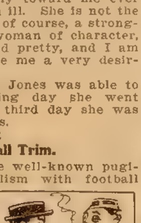
"Do you think so, my dear?"

"I certainly do, after a reasonable length of time."

"Well, now, do you know, dear, that relieves my mind of a great burden. The little widow Jenkins has acted rather demurely toward me ever since you were taken ill. She is not the woman that you are, of course, a strong-minded, intelligent woman of character, but she is plump and pretty, and I am sure she would make me a very desirable wife."

The next day Mrs. Jones was able to sit up; the following day she went downstairs, and the third day she was planning a new dress.

In Football Trim.



"Sailor" Burke, the well-known pugilist, compared pugilism with football the other day.

"Why," said the sailor, "I'd rather fight than eat, but football is too rough for me. I wouldn't play in a game of intercollegiate football for 100 per cent of the gate receipts. I'm not strong enough. Besides, I haven't got the nerve."

He laughed and went on:

"Last year, at the height of the football season, I met a Yalevard boy one Saturday night.

"'That's a bad black eye you've got there,' I said. 'Did you get it in today's game?'

"'Yes, I did,' said he. He scowled and patted his pocket. 'But do you know what I've got here, Sailor?'

"'No, what?'

"'The ear of the chap that blackened it!'"

The Smoky City.

John R. Scott, the well-known Pittsburgh author, was talking at the Pittsburgh Club about the libel law.

"The libel law is pretty severe," he said, "but some editors go too far in their fear of it.

"A Pittsburgh man once submitted a Pittsburgh story to a New York magazine, and got a wire from the editor:

"'Will accept story if cut out libel.'

"So the Pittsburgh man hurried over to New York and asked the editor whom he had libeled.

"'You have libeled your native city, sir,' was the reply.

"'Libeled dear old Pittsburgh? How so?' the author exclaimed.

"'Why,' said the editor, turning over the manuscript, 'don't you say here on page 23 that the heroine clutched the air desperately?'

"'Yes—go on.'

"'And then, two paragraphs further down, you say she washed her hands. Well, that——"

"The editor frowned angrily at the author.

"'That, sir, is a foul and disgusting libel on Pittsburgh's air.'"

Not Willing to Tell.

Mr. White—I understand, Smathers, that your church is about to go into court to sue certain delinquent worshippers for pew rent.

Brudder Smathers—Yassah; on'y I doesn't call folks dat won't pay de Lawd deir honest 'debtedness wuhshipahs

Mr. White—What do you call them?

Brudder Smathers—Ne'm mind, sah; Ne'm mind what I calls 'em. I called one of 'em what I called him, dis mawning, and he knicked me in de head wid a rock!

WANT ADS

Want and Classified Advertising not less than 14 words accepted for insertion in the Ledger and Blade at 25 cents per word.

AUTOMOBILES

KIBLINGER Auto Buggy $125.00. Good condition. Cost $485.00 new; guaranteed bargain; solid tires; wheel steer; black body; good top; red gear. Address Hunter, Hearst Building, Chicago

TWO Cylinder, 20 H.P. Rambler, $125. Roadster and Touring bodies. 5910 Frink St., Austin, Chicago, Ill

AGENTS

SCRUB Brush, Floor Mop, Self Wringer, all in one. Three pounds; ten sales a day common. Tried and proven. Hilker Mop Co., 1237 Grand Ave., Chicago.

AGENTS become stockholders with large commissions. Work for us and retire in few years selling safety razors and hollow-handle knives and forks. Hart Mfg. Co., Unionville, Conn.

E Z WASH actually washes clothes without rubbing; absolutely harmless. Send 25 cents, 10 washings' Agents wanted. Easy Wash Company, Independence, Kansas.

REPRESENTATIVE Agents wanted in several towns and cities to sell our well-known toilet articles. Quick sales. Big profits. Applicants should send five dollars for assorted samples. Money will be returned if unsatisfied. Dr. Charles' Flesh Food Co., 752 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, New York

AGENTS—$35 a week for two hours work a day, selling wonderful household necessity, new selling plan with free advertising does it. Collette Mfg. Co., Box 72, Amsterdam, N. Y.

FREE—"Investing For Profit" Magazine. Send me your name and I will mail you this magazine absolutely free. Before you invest a dollar anywhere get this magazine—it is worth $10 a copy to any man who intends to invest $5 or more per month. Tells you how $1,000 can grow to $22,000—how to judge different classes of investments, the real earning power of your money. This magazine six months free, if you write today. H. L. Barber, Publisher, 453, 28 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago.

AGENTS—Big money distributing free pkgs. Borax-ee Soap Powder. B. W. Ward & Co., 1770 Berteau, Chicago

WANTED—Lady canvassers make big money selling our articles. Used by every woman. Liberal commissions. No capital required. Send postal for catalog. The Moss Company, Dept. 52, Rochester, N. Y.

MONEY made easily. We show you. Send 2-cent stamp. The Instructor, Marvel, Arkansas.

PORTRAITS—Photo pillow tops, photo china plates, frames, sheet pictures, etc., at prices below the lowest and guaranteed. Rejects credited. Prompt shipments; 30 days' credit, catalogue and samples free. Jas. C. Bailey Co., Drawer A, Chicago.

$2.50 PER DAY paid man or woman. In each town to distribute free circulars and take orders for concentrated flavoring in tubes. J. S. Ziegler Co., 441 S. Dearborn Street, Chicago.

PINLESS Clothes Line agents coin money; sample prepaid 25c. 609 Wilcox Bldg., Portland, Oregon.

AGENTS WANTED Exclusive territory. Good chance to build up permanent business. Mail us $10 for 36-pound Feather Bed and receive without cost, 6-pound pair pillows. Freight on all prepaid. New feathers. Best ticking. Satisfaction guaranteed. Turner & Cornwell, Feather Dealers, Dept. 74, Charlotte, N. C. Our reference: Commercial National Bank.

HELP WANTED

WANTED—Railway Mail Clerks. Average $90.00. Rapid advancement. Every second week off duty with full pay. Short hours; no "layoffs." May examinations everywhere. Common education sufficient. "Pull" unnecessary. Farmers stand excellent chance. Write for free sample questions and schedule showing examination places. Franklin Institute, Dept. A 81, Rochester, New York.

WANT ADS

HELP WANTED

BIG Profits—Start a cleaning, Dyeing and Pressing Business; very little capital needed; we teach the latest methods by mail; write for our free book, "Opportunity." Sourbeer School, D-2, Parsons, Kansas.

FREE Illustrated Book tells about over 300,000 protected positions in U. S. service. More than 40,000 vacancies every year. There is a big chance here for you, sure and generous pay, lifetime employment. Easy to get. Just ask for booklet A1034. No obligation. Earl Hopkins, Washington, D. C.

GOVERNMENT Post Office Clerks. Examinations everywhere soon. Prepare under personal supervision of former Secretary Civil Service Examiners. Common education sufficient. Farmers eligible. Write today for Booklet B. Patterson Civil Service School, Rochester, New York.

WANTED. Railway Mail Clerks, Rural and City Carriers, Postoffice Clerks. Thousands needed. Examinations soon. Trial Lesson Free. Write Ozment, K, St. Louis.

WANTED—Active man in each locality To join this Society. And introduce our Memberships. Sick, accident, death benefits. All or spare time. Make $50 to $500 a month. Write. Box LH-293, Covington, Ky.

FEMALE HELP WANTED

LADIES can make shields at home; $10 per 100; work sent prepaid to reliable women. Particulars for stamped addressed envelope. Eureka Co., Dept. 17, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

FARMS FOR SALE

BEAUTIFUL Ozarks, fertile valleys, rich mountains, flowing springs, fruit, grain, stock, poultry; prices right. J. O. Mitchell & Co., Fayetteville, Arkansas.

FRUIT LANDS—Beautiful Kootenay Valley, B. C., 68 acres, subdivided into 2 4-acre tracts, 11 of 5-acres and one of 25 acres. The 25-acre tract is improved, has dwelling, stable, ice-house, etc. All for a limited time at the low price of $6,000. Adjoining land held at $200 per acre. Will cost you nothing to write and investigate. Owner forced to realize thereon. ¼ cash, balance easy terms. Only six hours from Spokane, Wash Pure water, ideal climate and very low taxes. Address D. B. Dulmage, Morgan Park, Illinois.

SOUND INVESTMENTS

REAL ESTATE First Mortgages, 7% to 10% per annum. Municipal and County Improvement Bonds, 7% to 8%. Private Corporation Stock and Bonds. Poindexter Realty Co., 264 Burwell Street, Bremerton, Washington.

FOR SALE—Cheap; long established Creamery, Mill and Ice Cream Business in city of 30,000, doing annual business of $60,000. Equipped with cold storage system and modern machinery. Owner must have change of climate. Frederick Tucker, Battle Creek, Michigan.

FOR MEN AND WOMEN—16 TO 70

SEND application for special "get-acquainted" offer. $10 yearly—old line policy against sickness and accidents. Pays $5,000 death; $25.00 weekly disability benefit. Reliable representatives wanted. L. B. Smutz, Mgr., 245 N. 7th Street, St. Louis, Missouri.

MUSICAL

SONG-WRITERS: Poems wanted. Make money! New ideal Details, advice, criticism absolutely free. Fleming Studio, 504 Gaiety Thea. Bldg., N. Y. C.

POULTRY AND PETS

CATALOG. Ponies, Stock, Dogs. Thirty varieties. D. Stodghill, Shelbyville, Kentucky.

GAMES AND ENTERTAINMENTS

MAGIC Tricks and Supplies. Amateurs supplied as well as the great professionals. Easy, Interesting. Entertaining. 120 page illustrated catalogue, price 10c. Read & Covert, 816 East 43rd Street, Chicago.

MISCELLANEOUS

RARE Books, art pictures, drugs, druggists' sundries, ladies' toilet goods and appliances. Catalog free. Globe Pub. Co., Box 274, Augusta, Michigan.

GENTLEMEN like these goods: 29 sample pictures 10c. Book list for stamp. Ord Co., Long Beach, Calif.

BARGAIN—Three fine neckties $1. Gold-plated Pin free. Ties and pin retail at $2.50. This offer is for short time only. Send $1 at once. Money refunded by return mail if not satisfied. Name colors desired. W. C. Watkins, Parnassus, Pa.

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AFFLICTED People take notice, perfect health without medicine. The most remarkable discovery of modern times applied to the process of healing. Oxygen and Nitrogen, nature's most powerful elements converted into electricity. Electro-Galvanic Rings (patent applied for) made of copper and zinc in same proportions that air contains nitrogen and oxygen. The acids of the body in contact with these metals, generate electricity—making perfect health. Guarantee endorsed by a National bank. For Rheumatism, Neuralgia, Indigestion, Female Weaknesses, Headache, Backache, Eczema, Fits, Nervous Disorders, [illegible], Stomach, Bowel, Kidney Troubles, etc. A ring on each hand makes a battery to both sets of nerves and muscles and establishes a circuit from one battery to the other. Absolutely harmless, but beneficial results guaranteed. Interesting scientific facts, philosophy, reasons, full particulars, testimonials, and thirty days' free trial offer sent on request. Be cured. Then take an agency and be independent for life. Write to T. B. Jones, Inventor and Manufacturer, Athens, Texas.

DRINK HABIT—Guaranteed home treatment—three days—lifelong result. The only reliable. Book mailed free. Edw. J. Woods, 534 Sixth Avenue, M 356, New York, N. Y.

MANTI TONIC—The great tonic for restoring nerve force and for all troubles of the kidneys and bladder. Write for free booklet. Kerr-Warren Chemical Co., Broadway and 40th St., New York City.

PERSONAL

MARRY—Book of Descriptions; mailed sealed free, many wealthy. The Exchange, Box 525 A, Kansas City, Missouri.

MARRIAGE PAPER free; best published for sure results; reliable. Eastern Agency 55, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

MARRY—Photos, descriptions and P. O. addresses of pretty, rich ladies and gents, want to marry, free. H. Jahn, St. Paul, Minnesota.

MARRY WEALTHY. Selected descriptions of refined pretty ladies, gents, want to marry. Free. Dr. Hutchison, Dept. 24, Sedalia, Mo.

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FUTURE, Past, Present revealed. Send dime and birthdate. Can astonish you. Madame Irene, 115 Second Street, Kewanee, Illinois.

MARRY—Thousands, Wealthy, will marry soon. Descriptions free. Confidential, 2c8 Market, San Francisco, California,

MARRY RICH—Matrimonial paper of highest character, containing hundreds of photos and descriptions of marriageable people with means; mailed free; sealed; either sex. Write. One may be your ideal. Standard Cor. Club, Box 607, Grays Lake, Illinois.

FREE Life Reading; send birthdate and dime postage to Dr. Smith, Dept. 36, Saginaw, Michigan

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HEIRS Wanted at once. 50,000 estates seeking claimants. You may be one. Facts in booklet BL. Send 2c stamp. International Claim Agency, Pittsburgh, Pa.

The Boy Detective;

Or, The Great Morgan Mystery

By Weldon J. Cobb

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Begun in No. 15, April 13. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

CHAPTER VII.

A FRIEND IN NEED.

BOB Archer did not move a muscle. Glancing down the menacing weapon leveled by a wicked-eyed, determined-looking ruffian, he realized that he was facing a dead shot. The boy detective stood perfectly still. His eye never quailed and his cheek did not blanch, but he comprehended that he was in deadly peril. Bob summoned courage, cleverness, and patience to meet the situation right.

The man who had challenged him never took his eye off his face. His revolver ready for instantaneous action, he groped at his side, drew out a bull's-eye lantern, and focused its broad rays directly on his captive

"Put up that electric contrivance of yours," he ordered.

"All right," answered Bob, with affected cheerfulness restoring the device to his pocket

"Fold your arms"

'Going to put me through some physical culture stunts?" questioned Bob boldly, with a smile.

"Don't get funny and do as I say."

"I'm accommodating, mister. What's this hold-up for?"

"I'm going to find out what the meaning is of your hanging around here."

'Why," retorted Bob, innocently. "I explained that to you once"

"Did you?"

"Yes, I am after my dog, and there he is."

"Your dog?"

"Well, isn't it?"

"No"

"Maybe it belong to you," insinuated Bob.

The man growled wrathfully. Then he placed a whistle to his lips. A peculiar sound was emitted. Bob, held stationary under the bristling menace of the revolver, awaited developments with patience and considerable interest.

They materialized promptly. The sound of rushing footsteps outside preceded the arrival of a breathless individual, who burst into view on a leap through the open door of the shed.

Bob's original captor was a brutal, cruel-faced individual. The newcomer evidently his assistant, was of the same criminal type, but quick, sly, ferret-faced. Bob decided he had never seen two more forbidding looking ruffians

"Hello!" ejaculated the newcomer, coming to a dead stop and staring wonderingly at Bob. "Who's this?"

"That's what we want to find out," was the surly and resolute rejoinder. "Make sure of him, Barnes!"

Bob was an athlete, and an acrobat as well. At even odds he would have put up a fight. However, with one man holding his life at the caprice of a hair-trigger turn, and another blocking his exit, the young detective resigned himself to the exigencies of the occasion

The man addressed as Barnes was upon him in a flash. The other advanced straight up to him, weapon and dark lantern fully covering him, and ready to be of assistance if needed

Bob's arms were rudely pressed behind him, and a coil of flexible wire twisted about his wrists

"What's the programme?" demanded the last comer on the scene

'March him to the boss'

'What's the row'

"He knows too much.'

"About——"

"Never mind—say, the dog."

"Ah!"

Bob was forced along across the garden The men with him traversed a basement, ascended a pair of stairs, and conducted Bob into a lighted room. Bob noticed that it was closely curtained. It was very shabbily furnished.

"Now then, what?" inquired the man answering to the name of Barnes.

"Search him."

Bob started. He looked about him in vain for the least encouragement to attempt an escape. Silently he stood, while his pockets were rifled.

"Thunder!" gasped Barnes, as Bob's badge of authority was revealed.

The eyes of his companion blazed wickedly

"As bad as that, eh?" muttered Barnes.

"Worse—for him," retorted the other man, darkly

'Detective, eh?"

"Looks so, doesn't it, pardner?"

"It does, indeed."

"You don't suppose that he knows——" began Barnes.

"Never mind what he knows," interrupted the other, taking up in both hands the articles he had found upon their captive. "Fetch him along."

"To the boss?"

"Of course."

Another flight of stairs was ascended. They finally entered a large room, apparently a sleeping apartment. One corner was almost completely shut off by a screen. The man Barnes pulled Bob to a chair. His confrere proceeded to a bed behind the screen, which manifestly held an occupant.

The low hum of conversation proceeded from the sheltered corner of the room. The midnight warden seemed to be informing his master of what had transpired during the preceding half-hour.. Then Bob heard him say quite audibly:

"This is his star."

"Ha, a detective—you are sure of it?" a harsh, hissing tone demanded.

"Doesn't that look like it? See here—his gun. And there's a pair of darbies."

"What else?"

"A photograph."

"Let me look at it. Furies"

"Take care! Take care, boss! You'll start that face of yours bleeding again'

"Let me up! I will get up! That picture—what does it mean? After all the years' Are they closing in on me——"

"S-sh!" warned the other. "Do you want to give everything away? Listen."

Bob Archer was in a vortex of wild conjecture and conviction. His rapid mind readily evolved a theory as to the cause of the frantic excitement of the unseen man behind the screen. He was the murderer of the man at the Rossiter Building. In the death battle, a false nose had been torn rfom his face, and he had probably suffered some other injury in the struggle.

Of all this the boy detective was convinced. And now, additionally, the sight

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Handle a live line of tailoring—one that makes money quick. Take orders for the famous **SUPREME** line of men's made to measure clothes. Real, snappy, stylish styles that make a hit wherever shown. It's an easy way to make money! We are one of the oldest firms in business—are known from coast to coast for the quality of our all wool garments—and every man seeing our styles will want to order. Start now in your spare time or devote all your time. Build up a trade and get in business for yourself. No capital required. Even in your spare time you ought to be able to make

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UNCLAIMED WEALTH.

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This May Mean YOU.

Thousands of families are wanted to claim fortunes. Many now living in poverty are Rich and don't know it. Our 400 page cloth bound book, entitled: NEXT OF KIN, contains authentic lists of unclaimed estates and heirs wanted and advertised in America and abroad to claim fortunes. There are thousands of names in this book. Also contains Chancery Court of England and Ireland List. Your ancestors' name may be among them. We want every family in the U. S. and Canada to have this book. Send $1.00 to cover cost compiling this 400 page book and we will mail it to you at once, postpaid, or. send two cents in postage for circular.

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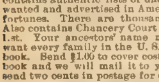

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Two years would be a long time to wait for a smoke—but every time you fill your pipe with Velvet you smoke tobacco that has been cured for two years.

Old Father Time is the only one who really knows how to cure tobacco, and it takes him *two full years* to remove all the bite and burn and make tobacco like Velvet.

So-called patent processes cannot produce the same mature, ripe flavor and smoothness that is secured by this tedious, old-fashioned aging.

Velvet is made from carefully selected middle leaves of choice Burley. It contains no stems or sticks or scraps.

If your dealer hasn't it, ask him to get it for you from his jobber.

Full size two-ounce Tins, 10c. One-ounce bags—convenient for cigarettes—5c.

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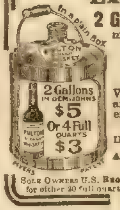

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We ship on 30 days' credit, if you have your merchant or bank write us guaranteeing account. No C.O.D. Full Quart Bottles of Rye, Bourbon or Corn are expressed prepaid in plain boxes, either 4 for $3, 8 for $6, or 12 for $9.

Unless fully satisfied, please return; if paid for, all your money will be refunded by return mail.

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SOLE OWNERS U.S. REG. DIST'Y No. 22, 6TH. DIST. KY., Orders from Mont., Wyo., Colo., N. Mex. and West thereof, must call for either 20 full quart bottles, 6 gallons in demijohns or a cask, for $15. by prepaid freight. Write for express terms.

Write for our Book, "A Fair Customer" and price list—sealed.

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of the photograph taken from the police archives had wrought the man up to a high frenzy. Was it possible, Bob Archer asked himself, that this man was Dudley Lane!

The garden watcher succeeded in quieting down his master, for now their voices were again cautiously diminished to a low hum. Bob felt that they were discussing his doom—that his fate hung upon the ensuing confab.

It was only after quite a long spell the boy caught a word here and there from behind the screen.

"You think he came here accidentally," the man in the bed asked.

"I think he followed the dog."

"You saw no other suspicious characters about?"

"None."

"And he had the false nose. Markley, this detective holds my life in his hands."

"Therefore——"

"He must die."

"You decide that definitely?"

"I do."

"That's enough. I follow orders."

"Make it deadly sure."

"Trust to me."

Bob chilled ominously at the words—cruel, resolute, implacable. As the vicious-faced garden warden came from behind the screen, Bob read in his heartless face the complete type of a ruffian without conscience or mercy.

The fellow leaned over and whispered something into the ear of the man, Barnes.

"End it!" shouted the garden sentinel.

The man below sprang at Bob, caught him by the throat, and pinned him to the wall with one firm, strong hand. With the other he poised aloft the dagger. To the amazement of the startled young detective, as he so, he whispered: "Pretend to die."

One, two, three—up, down, up, down—went the dagger. The blade apparently driven into the breast of the defenseless victim clear to the hilt, death sure and sudden seemed inevitable.

Bob swayed, but unhurt. He could not understand the strange, hurried injunction, "Pretend to die," but he obeyed the command. He sank to the floor apparently lifeless.

"There's an old well in the corner of the cellar," shouted down Barnes.

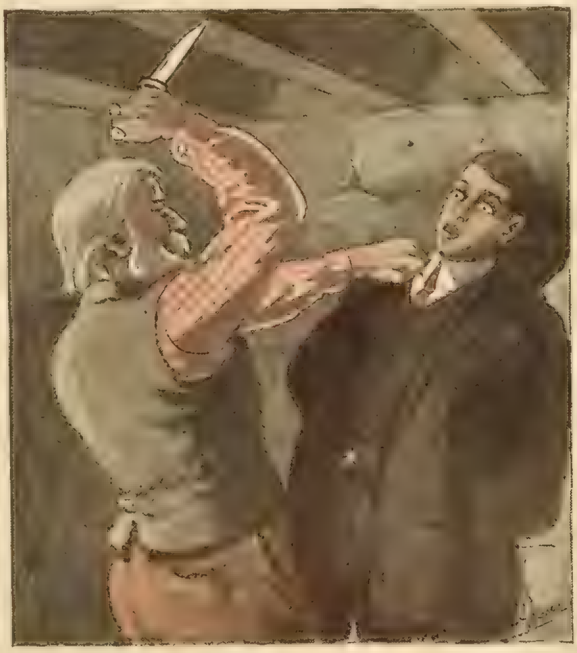
"Yes, drop his body into it," echoed his companion.

The man below picked Bob up in his arms and bore him out of direct radius of the lantern.

"In the corner," he whispered again, "is a small window. Creep through, get away, and remember—some one else is watching this crowd beside you."

Bob's heart thrilled. Who was this strange friend in need? He comprehended that the apparently deadly dagger was a trick weapon, where pressure and a spring drove the blade back into the handle.

Reaching the dark spot where the top of an old well was outlined, the man threw Bob toward a corner where a



"Pretend to die!"

window aperture showed. He saw his new friend pick up a heavy block of wood, poise it, and fling it down into the well.

Splash!

"That's the ticket, is it?" questioned the latter.

"Yes."

"It's risky, if it ever gets out."

"It musn't get out."

Bob was led down to the basement again. The man Barnes proceeded to secure the outside door. Then he went to the middle of the basement and pulled up a trapdoor. Below, Bob judged, was a sub-cellar. Then the man lighted a lantern.

"Get Provis," ordered the man.

Barnes went to a little partitioned-off room at the front end of the basement and called out, "Hey, Provis!"

A blear-eyed, stupid-looking man came into view. He face was covered with whiskers and his shaggy hair hung like a mane.

"You've been here a week," said the companion of Barnes. "We've kept you safe and treated you well. Is that right?"

"That's right," assented the man.

"You said you were willing to do all our bidding for protection and pay."

"That's me," nodded the man.

"All right. We are going to lower you and this spy into the sub-cellar. You have a weapon."

The man addressed, displayed, with a broad grin, a slim long-handled dagger.

"That's it," said the other. "Better than a shot—less noise. You must make it sure."

"Trust me."

"It will make you solid with the boss."

"Yes, yes, that's good."

A short ladder was lowered through the trapdoor. Bob was forced down it. The new man had preceded him. Barnes held the lantern so that its rays partly but dimly illumined the dark and damp sub-cellar.

CHAPTER VIII.
TRACING A CLEW.

"A narrow graze!"

Bob spoke the words with a mingled sense of vivid relief and wonder. He had crawled through the window as directed, had gained the garden, crossed it, scaled the wall, and started away from the vicinity of the mysterious old mansion without delay.

Older men than he in the great detective profession would have sought what he felt to be a necessity—quiet, an opportunity for thought. His progress and action for nearly three hours had been rapid, continuous, and, most of all, startling.

Bob was like some person shot down the course of a marvelously tragic series of events without a pause for breath. So much had transpired that was coincidental, baffling, unusual, that he felt like a man with a tangled skein in his grasp, which he must unravel slowly, patiently, skilfully, in order to arrive at even a coherent starting point.

To all intents and purposes, so far as the denizens of the old Morgan mansion were concerned, Bob was dead. He instantly recognized an important point in the conclusion. It meant that the man with the frozen face and his accomplices were thrown off their guard. Doubtless, Bob reasoned, they supposed him to be the sole secret possessor of an accidental clew, and that with his disappearance their liberty was safe.

"Which means," reasoned Bob aptly,

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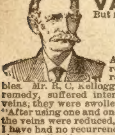

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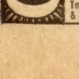

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"that I must at once assume a new identity."

That was not a very difficult end for Bob Archer to attain. When he had told the chief of police that he had made a study of disguises and other expedients in the detective line, he had not exaggerated. Bob summoned a cab. Within a half an hour he was in his own room in a retired residence portion of the city.

The young detective threw himself into an armchair, and for a full twenty minutes focused his mind intently on the important theme uppermost in his thoughts. Step by step, item by item, he went over every occurrence of the night. He was satisfied that the man who had ordered his death was the murderer of the unidentified man at the Rossiter Buildings. Further than that, Bob felt sanguine that this man with the frozen face was no other than Dudley Lane.

It was easy to guess, to surmise; Bob Archer knew that if he was correct in his conjectures, no rash, flimsy action would enforce and prove up his suspicions.

"There is more than murder in this case," he decided. "If this new Morgan is, indeed, the man whom of all men I am seeking for, he has some crafty plot in view. It is not enough merely to connect him with the new crime at Rossiter Buildings. The whole details of his scheme must be brought to light."

Bob soon marked out the course he would pursue. He decided to work independently of the detective bureau. The formal end of the case Wooldridge would attend to. Free and unhampered, the boy detective decided to work out his own clews unaided.

One loose thread of the tangled skein of plot and circumstance baffled Bob not a little. This was the identity and motives of the man with the trick dagger.

Why had this man spared his life? Why had he aided in his escape? What had he meant by indicating that his affiliations with the ruffian crew were not what they seemed?

Was this mysterious individual a spy, perhaps like himself an emissary of justice, working in his own way against the alleged new Morgan?

Then Bob's thoughts drifted away to the initial event of the tragic chain which had led to the present situation. For the life of him he could not get the incident of the hurry call over the police wire out of his mind.

The silvery, girlish, frantic tones that had announced the peril of the victim of the murder, still echoed in the ears of the boy detective. She was aware of the danger that menaced, that finally robbed of life the man at the Rossiter Buildings. Then, why might she not know of the assassin, his identity, his motives.

"Who is she? How shall I find her?" cried Bob, arising rested and energetic to his feet. "Yes, I must follow out that branch of the case."

"Bob was quick to think, prompt to act. He formulated a rapid plan of procedure.

He went to the dressing case, and soon was engaged in making a complete and remarkable transformation. A stain applied to his face made it resemble that of an East Indian in hue. A wig, a pair of glasses, and entire change in the texture and style of his clothing, completed a metamorphosis that effectually hid his identity.

Bob left the house feeling secure in his disguise. He went first to detective headquarters. It was, however, only to ascertain that Wooldridge had taken the murder case in charge and to secure a new badge of authority.

Then Bob proceeded to the central telephone exchange. The sleepy-eyed girl in charge aroused somewhat when he announced that he was from the police.

"I wish to learn where a message came from that went over the wires to police headquarters about ten o'clock last night," he said.

The girl smiled vaguely and shook her head.

"That will be rather difficult," she said.

"Why so?"

"We do not preserve a full record of local business."

"I think this was long distance," explained Bob.

"That is different," said the girl, "although we can only tell you where calls from out of the city came. We simply keep track of the charges. For instance—here," and the girl indicated some notation slips on file.

Then she read off a list of nearly twenty outside towns that had made long-distance calls during the previous evening.

Bob wrote down all the names. He thanked the girl. Then he went to the office of the signal service bureau. The man in charge greeted him politely and accommodatingly when he learned that he was from the detective bureau.

"I wish to learn," said Bob, "where in the vicinity of the city there was a thunderstorm at about ten o'clock last night."

"Well," exclaimed the weather man. "That won't be easy."

"Why not?"

"The entire district showed fair at our ten o'clock observation."

"Somewhere within a short distance of the city, I believe," declared Bob, "there was a storm at the time I state."

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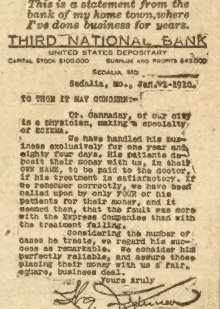

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CAPITAL STOCK $100,000 SURPLUS AND PROFITS $45,000
SEDALIA, MO.
Sedalia, Mo., Jan. [illegible]-1910.

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The man went over his weather chart. He studied it intently for a few moments. He compared Bob's lists with his own.

"You see," we get unofficial observations from these towns twice a day," he said. "They report clear. No, hold on. Here is a deviation."

"What is it?" inquired Bob, eagerly.

"'Brief meteorological disturbance,'" read the man from his notes. "'Low barometric depression. Some precipitation.'"

"Whew!" laughed Bob, at the big words. "Which means to you wise people?"

"The possibility of a short thunderstorm."

"And the place?"

"Fairview."

"Good!" said Bob Archer, with satisfaction. "Now for the Fairview end of this mysterious case and the girl with the silvery voice."

CHAPTER IX.

Bob went back to his room after leaving the telephone exchange. He appreciated the value of rest, and throwing himself on a couch was soon slumbering profoundly.

It was shortly after eight o'clock when the young detective arrived at headquarters. In his new disguise no one recognized him. Bob awaited an opportunity, until he saw Wooldridge alone in a private room writing out an official report, probably of the Rossiter Buildings case, when he also entered the apartment and seated himself opposite to the veteran detective.

"Well, sir," challenged Wooldridge, staring at the intruder.

"Only Archer, Mr. Wooldridge," smiled Bob.

"H'm!" retorted the expert sleuth. "You know finely how to make up."

"That is a compliment coming from you. What about the murder case, Mr. Wooldridge?"

"No clew," sententiously reported the detective.

"As to identity?"

"None."

"And the motive?"

"Not yet exploited. See here, Archer," added the detective, as he caught a peculiar gleam in the expressive eyes of his visitor, "you have not been idle, I see."

"No," admitted Bob. "I have found out a good deal."

"That black dog?'

"Got away from me."

"Too bad."

"But I traced the murderer."

"You are sure of that?"

"Oh, yes."

"Well?"

"Mr. Wooldridge," said Bob seriously, "there is a great deal to tell, but it would be only half a story."

"You mean?"

"Just what I say—a baffling, uncompleted chain of incidents."

"I see."

"There would be missing exact motive, necessary links. In fact, I may say that I have not as yet secured absolute proofs."

"And the other half of the story?" inquired Wooldridge, with a keen look at Bob.

"I think I shall be able to unravel today."

"Good. If you need my assistance, call on me."

"I certainly shall. I would prefer, however, to work first on independent lines, if possible."

"I have faith in your ability, Archer. Good luck to you."

"Thank you."

Controlling all curiosity, Wooldridge resumed his writing. Sanguine and self-reliant, Bob left the room.

There were two ways of reaching Fairview, Bob found on making inquiries. He could go by railroad or on a trolley line. A train on the steam line was to leave shortly, and the young detective chose that route.

Bob reached Fairview to find it to be a small but rather remote suburb of the great city. He went at once to the single telephone office of the village. A young lady was in charge.

"I am making some inquiries," he said, "and must rely upon you for information."

"Yes, sir?" responded the girl interrogatively.

"Were you in charge here last evening?"

"Up to midnight, yes," was the reply. "I am on duty from seven to twelve mornings, and the same evenings."

"I see," said Bob. "What was the weather here yesterday?"

"Very pleasant."

"No rain?"

"Why, yes," assented the girl, after an instant of thought. "But only a few drops."

"About what time?"

"After ten o'clock."

"Was it a storm?" inquired Bob.

"In a way, yes, but a very light and a very quick one."

"Was there any thunder or lightning?"

"Yes, and very strange it was," replied the girl, with animation. "A single heavy cloud passed over. Very suddenly, when no one was expecting it, there was a vivid flash and a quick clap of thunder. It came with a terrific shock. It put the lines slightly out of order."

"Were you alone in the office at the time?" asked Bob next.

"Yes—no. That is, I was alone so far as any of the office force being here."

"And strangers—outsiders?"

"Why, just as the first few drops of rain were falling, and it looked as though we were going to have a storm, a lady stepped into the outside room to get shelter from the shower."

"Who was she?" pressed Bob.

"Mrs. Cairns."

"Was she alone?"

"No, the young girl who lives with her accompanied her."

"And who is she?" questioned Bob.

"I don't know her name. Nobody else in the town does, either, I fancy."

"Newcomer?"

"For Fairview, yes."

"Who is Mrs. Cairns?"

"She lives in the old house at the corner of the crossroads. It's just beyond the town limits. She used to run a sort of private reform school for unmanageable children. I guess she was pretty harsh with her charges, for one by one her pupils were taken away from her. About a month ago we noticed this new girl there. She is a pretty, modest

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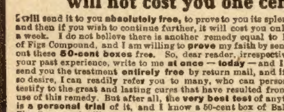

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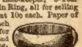

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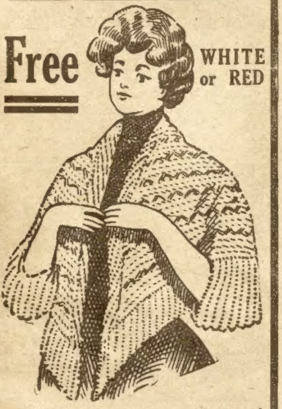

We have made a contract with one of the big mills for a lot of woolen shawls.

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Probably nothing is so useful in a home as a shawl like this. Just the thing for changeable weather. It is very handy to throw on the head when you run into your neighbor's house. Fine to wrap the baby in. Throw it over your shoulders when sitting in a draft.

These shawls are large and well-made, and we want every reader of this paper to have one of them, so we will send you one **FREE OF ALL CHARGE**, if you will enclose $1.00 for a year's subscription to this paper.

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girl. Sad looking, too. We felt quite an interest in her, but she is never allowed to go out except in the company of Mrs. Cairns, who guards her and watches her like an eagle."

"Some mystery about the girl?" suggested Bob.

"We think so. I'm sure now, though," proceeded the telephone girl, "that the girl has some mystery about her, for she got out of the clutches of that cross old woman last night."

"Indeed, how was that?"

"Why, Mrs. Cairns was restless and anxious to get home. She kept outside under the awning watching for the rain to stop. The girl was seated inside the big room. Suddenly she stole cautiously over to me. Her face was white as death, and she was trembling all over. 'Miss,' she gasped, 'will you do me a great favor?' 'Surely' I said, quite pitying her. 'Put me in on the 'phone for the city,' she pleaded. 'Where in the city?' I asked. 'Police headquarters,' she panted out. 'Quick! quick! before Mrs. Cairns sees me.' 'Hurry into the booth,' I directed her. She ran there and I made the connection for her."

"You are sure it was police headquarters?" asked Bob.

"Oh, yes."

"What next?"

"I heard her talking. Then suddenly came that great clap of thunder. It affected all our instruments, and must have given her a shock. She rushed out, pale and breathless. 'Thank you, ah, thank you!' she said, and then as Mrs. Cairns came in and she went away with her."

"Famous!" said Bob to himself, with great satisfaction. "Miss, where can I buy you the best box of candy in town?"

"What, what for?" blushed the girl.

"For being a sensible, clear-headed young lady of business," responded Bob, "and giving me some very important information."

"Oh, I don't want anything for that," declared the telephone operator. "If I have done that poor girl any good, I am glad."

"You have, indeed. I shall get the candy all the same, though," observed Bob brightly, "so, while enjoying it, you will forget all about telling anybody what I asked you about."

"I know what you are," said the girl, brightly.

"Indeed?"

"Yes."

"Well, what am I?"

"A detective," guessed the young lady, confidently.

"I see you are clever," laughed Bob. "If that is true, I am trying to do that girl a good turn."

"Then, depend on it, I shall do nothing to prevent it," pledged tne girl.

Bob went out and purchased the reward promised, and left the telephone station feeling very much encouraged as to the prospects of his learning something of importance concerning the mysterious girl who had sent the strange warning message to detective headquarters the evening previous.

"I feel certain I am going to run down the most important branch of the case right here at Fairview," he soliloquized, as he started in the direction of the residence of the mysterious Mrs. Cairns.

The boy detective never dreamed it, but he was taking the first step in as mystic and tragic an experience as ever came within the grasp of the strong, unswerving hands of justice.

This extremely interesting story will be concluded in next week's Ledger, presenting the readers with some very strange happenings. If you are not a subscriber to the Ledger, you are strongly urged to send in your subscription at once.

* * *

An Elusive Name.

"Good morning, Mr. Brown. Sleep well?" casually inquired the hotel clerk as he received the room key from a yawning guest.

"Rank," and the yawn broke off with emphasis on the word.

"Very sorry, sir. Wasn't the bed all right?"

"Oh, yes, the bed was all right. It was nothing about the hotel. Did you ever get something on your mind that was of absolutely no consequence to you, like recalling the name of the author of a certain book or the name of a slight acquaintance, and get in such a state of mind that you couldn't go to sleep to save your life?"

"Indeed I have, sir. Many times. I suppose every body has such spells. What was weighing on your mind?"

"The most absurd thing you ever heard of. When we went to bed my wife was trying to recall the name of a neighbor of ours when we lived in Buffalo. 'You remember him perfectly?' she said. 'Oh, dear! what was his name?'"

"'Oh, yes, you mean—let's see now. What was that fellow's name? I know it just as well as I know my own. Mays, Malles, Meadows—I know it commenced with an "m".' I replied.

"No, it didn't. It commenced with an "h." It might have been Hays instead of Mays. Hays, Hale, Hare, Heltons. No, I believe you're right. It did commence with an "m" instead of an "h." Oh, what in the world was that man's name?' She kept guessing.

"'No, I was wrong, it didn't commence with an "m" or an "h" either one. Maybe it was with "f." No, that doesn't sound right,' and I looked at my wife then and you would have thought she had turned to a statue. She had been brushing her hair and sat so intent in recalling the name that she held the brush aloft in the air and hadn't moved a muscle for five minutes. Then I thought about myself. I was standing before a mirror wrestling with a collar and I had been holding my hand at the back of my neck and hadn't moved either. I commenced laughing.

"'Well, what difference does it make?' I asked and that brought her out of her spell.

"Pretty soon my wife said, 'It sounded like Hays or Hale.' Immediately I was plunged into the torture again.

"'Yes, but it wasn't either. It didn't commence with "h."'

"'Well,' my wife said, 'I'm going to start with "a" and go clear through the alphabet till I come to the letter it started with. I'd remember the name then, I know. "A"—let's see, now. Ale, Ayres, Ames—no; it was none of those. Bales, Bayes, Baird, Baine; it didn't commence with "b," though.'

"And so we kept it up, c, d, e, f, g, h, and on, arguing about certain words and letters till I was worn to a frazzle. We must have talked two hours. Finally I dropped off to sleep.

"It must have been three o'clock in the morning when I was startled in the midst of one of these dreams by a low 'Walter, Walter.' It was my wife.

"What's the matter?" I whispered.

"'It's Sayles, Edwin Sayles. Don't you remember now?'

"'Thank God,' I answered. 'You've thought of it at last,' and I did sleep in peace from then until morning.

* * *

Sharp Retort.

George Ade had finished his speech at a recent dinner party, and on seating himself a well-known lawyer rose, shoved his hands deep into his trousers' pockets, as was his habit, and laughingly inquired of those present:

"Doesn't it strike the company as a little unusual that a professional humorist should be funny?"

When the laugh had subsided, Ade drawled out:

"Doesn't it strike the company as a little unusual that a lawyer should have his hands in his own pockets?"

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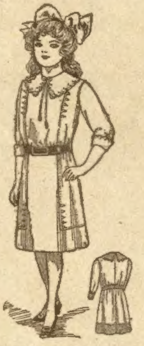
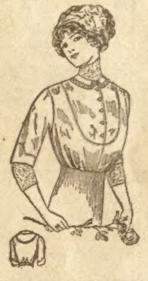
The great difficulty in making one's own garments is to get suitable patterns. Our women readers could make many pretty and useful things for themselves and their children if they could get well-made patterns. We have arranged to give our readers a pattern service unexcelled.

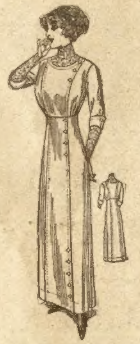
We make a splendid offer of the best and most fashionable patterns that can be produced by the greatest designers of New York and Paris, and, what is more, these patterns will be within the reach of every one, and every one will have a wide selection to choose from. **Read our splendid Offer below.**



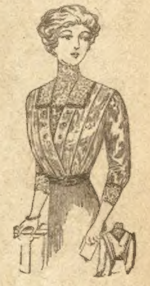
7365 Girl's Dress, 10 to 14 years.



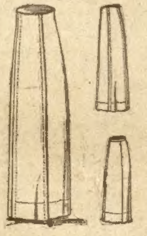
7370 Blouse or Shirt Waist; 34 to 42 bust.



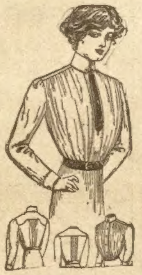
7388 Semi-Princesse Gown, 34 to 42 bust.



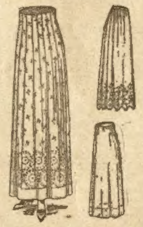
7374 Tucked Surplice Blouse, 34 to 42 bust.



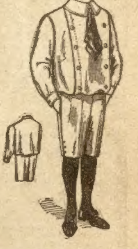
7387 Six Gored Skirt, 22 to 30 waist.



7366 Blouse or Shirt Waist, 34 to 40 bust.



7363 Straight Skirt for Misses and Small Women; 14, 16 and 18 years.



7390 Boy's Suit; 6 to 12 years.

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Here is the way we will do it. To every one who will send us one dollar for a year's subscription to The Chicago Ledger we will send absolutely free five pattern coupons. Each coupon will be good for one pattern and you can select the patterns from those illustrated in any issue of The Chicago Ledger. When you see a pattern that you like all you have to do is to send us a coupon and it will be sent to you at once. In this way you will have hundreds of patterns from which to pick the five that you will be entitled to, and you have all the time you need to pick out the ones you want.

These patterns are the best that can be made. Each pattern gives full directions for the cutting and making with information as to the amount of cloth required, etc., so that any one can make any of the designs illustrated with no trouble at all. At the same time, they are so stylish and accurately cut that dressmakers and seamstresses all over the country will be quick to take advantage of this liberal offer. Some will subscribe for two years so they can get ten coupons. These designs are made by the best designers and modists of New York and Paris, and are up-to-the-minute in fashion and beauty.

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To get these five coupons entitling you to five patterns, fill out the blank below and enclose it with one dollar for a year's subscription to The Chicago Ledger. Do this now—today! No woman should be without the Ledger's Pattern Coupon Book. Be among the thousands of women who will get these coupons.

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THE FAIRY CORNER

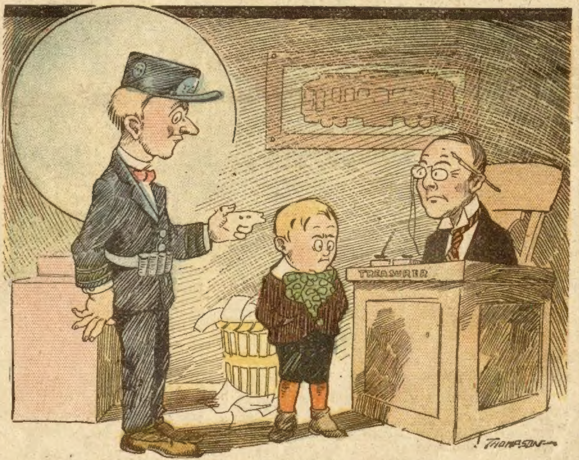
LITTLE MOTHERS.

"I'm just as worried as I can be
About my dollie," said little Marie.
"I think she's a fever, her cheeks are so red.
And that's a sure sign, the doctor man said."

"See my poor dolly. She's very sick, too;
I think she's the sicker," said Sallie Ann Lou.
"No, mine," said little Marie, "is the worst,
Because I thought up this play at first."

Bob and the Auto.

Bob did not mean to do it. He is not that kind of a dog. He would not get into mischief for anything in the world. He has not done anything wrong—intentionally—since he was a puppy. That just goes to show how the world is run. Try as hard as you will, you are sure to knock down a vase or spill alcohol on the table, or do something else like that. You can't help it, of course, but you wish you hadn't done it. That was the way with Bob. He did not intend to do it—had not the slightest wish to start things going—but he did it, just the same, and instantly regretted it.



Manager (to trolley conductor who is turning in his fares)—What's this boy here for?

Conductor—That's one of me fares. He had his nickel in his mouth and swallowed it, so I rung him up and am turning him in.

Bob is a bull terrier and he lives in Harrison, Ark. He is about the best kind of dog to have—especially for children—because he is the kind that will bear all sorts of playful abuse and not say a whimper. Bull terriers are wise dogs. Sometimes they seem a bit too wise. Bob's owner knows this, and so he thinks that maybe Bob knew what he was doing when he jumped into the automobile the other day. Bob didn't of course. It was all a mistake. He is used to riding all around town in the machine and he goes in and out without minding the noise of the engine. The engine was left running while the owner of the car went in the house and Bob stayed in the street to keep small boys from squawking the horn. He walked around and jumped in and out, and in some way he threw the clutch so that the engine caught the driving wheel. The automobile started moving slowly down the street, with no one to guide it except the bull terrier.

Bob was so frightened for a moment that he could not bark, but only for a moment. He raised such a noise that his master came out of the house and saw his property running away. It was not running fast, and so he caught up with it easily and stopped it, much to Bob's delight. The dog had been frightened, but he had stayed in the car, because he had been left to guard it.

Attar of Roses.

In the whole realm of flowers there is no flower of greater age than the rose. Away back in the Bible times it was mentioned as a thing of beauty and joy. No other flower grows in so many climates. Every continent in the world except Australia produces its wild roses. From Greenland to Cape Colony, from Mexico to India, there are periods of the year in which the blossoms throw forth their welcome fragrance.

The cultivation of roses for the extraction of the attar is a great source of wealth in many countries. Especially is this so in Bulgaria and Roumania. A whole district there, comprising 5,000 square miles, is devoted to a variety of red rose, for roses of other colors have not this essence.

At the time of the rose harvest whole armies of people of every age and color come from all parts of the country. The work admits of no delay, for the roses must be gathered quickly. For miles and miles the blossom-laden fields are covered with workers in their picturesque native costumes, all busy with the rose-picking. The work is for all, and all earn good returns. They are paid by results, so much a pound. Baskets are provided, and when these are full, after being weighed and checked, they are slung across the backs of donkeys.

It takes 300,000 roses to produce one ounce of the attar. There is little wonder that it is costly. It is worth a good deal more than its weight in gold. Solid gold is priced at $20 an ounce, and the same quantity of attar would cost the purchaser $80.

A Cloud of Fish.

Captain Shelley and his son catch lobsters and fish for a living. They go out at night in a launch off the Coronado Islands, on the California coast, and they pull up their lobster pots and nets and remove what they find inside. They keep a bright light in the launch so that they can see to work.

One night, while they were pulling in their nets, a school of flying fish rose out of the water and dashed at the light. The fish do not really fly, but they soar on their broad fins out of the water and into it again. The captain got hit by a dozen or two and then went below, but his son tried to stay on deck. Finally he was knocked down by the multitude of fish and had to follow his father to the cabin, where they both stayed until morning, when the fish returned to the water for good and left the fishermen in peace.

IN THE TREETOP.

My room's among the treetops—
It's up three stories high;
At night the windy branches
Swish-swash against the sky,
And when the rain comes rustling
And frightened leaflets cry,
I cuddle in the bed clothes
All comfortable and dry.

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